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SONGS OF MANY SEASONS.

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OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

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OPENING THE WINDOW.

Thus I lift the sash, so long
Shut against the flight of song;
All too late for vain excuse, —
Lo, my captive rhymes are loose!

Rhymes that, flitting through my brain,
Beat against my window-pane,
Some with gayly colored wings,
Some, alas! with venomed stings.

Shall they bask in sunny rays?
Shall they feed on sugared praise?
Shall they stick with tangled feet
On the critic's poisoned sheet?

Are the outside winds too rough?
Is the world not wide enough?
Go, my winged verse, and try, —
Go, like Uncle Toby's fly!

PROGRAMME.

Reader — gentle — if so be
Such still live, and live for me,
Will it please you to be told
What my ten-score pages hold?

Here are verses that in spite
Of myself I needs must write,
Like the wine that oozes first
When the unsqueezed grapes have burst.

Here are angry lines, "too hard"!
Says the soldier, battle-scarred.
Could I smile his scars away
I would blot the bitter lay,

Written with a knitted brow,
Read with placid wonder now.
Throbbed such passion in my heart?
— Did his wounds once really smart?

Here are varied strains that sing
All the changes life can bring,
Songs when joyous friends have met,
Songs the mourner's tears have wet.

See the banquet's dead bouquet,
Fair and fragrant in its day;
Do they read the self-same lines, —
He that fasts and he that dines?

Year by year, like milestones placed,
Mark the record Friendship traced.
Prisoned in the walls of time
Life has notched itself in rhyme:

As its seasons slid along,
Every year a notch of song,
From the June of long ago,
When the rose was full in blow,

Till the scarlet sage has come
And the cold chrysanthemum.
Read, but not to praise or blame;
Are not all our hearts the same?

For the rest, they take their chance, —
Some may pay a passing glance;
Others, — well, they served a turn, —
Wherefore written, would you learn?

Not for glory, not for pelf,
Not, be sure, to please myself,
Not for any meaner ends, —
Always "by request of friends."

Here 's the cousin of a king, —
Would I do the civil thing?
Here 's the first-born of a queen;
Here 's a slant-eyed Mandarin.

Would I polish off Japan?
Would I greet this famous man,
Prince or Prelate, Sheik or Shah? —
— Figaro çi and Figaro là!

Would I just this once comply? —
So they teased and teased till I
(Be the truth at once confessed)
Wavered — yielded — did my best.

Turn my pages, — never mind
If you like not all you find;
Think not all the grains are gold
Sacramento's sand-banks hold.

Every kernel has its shell,
Every chime its harshest bell,
Every face its weariest look,
Every shelf its emptiest book,

Every field its leanest sheaf,
Every book its dullest leaf,
Every leaf its weakest line, —
Shall it not be so with mine?

Best for worst shall make amends,
Find us, keep us, leave us friends
Till, perchance, we meet again.
Benedicite. — Amen!

October 7, 1874.

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IN THE QUIET DAYS.

AN OLD-YEAR SONG.

As through the forest, disarrayed
By chill November, late I strayed,
A lonely minstrel of the wood
Was singing to the solitude:
I loved thy music, thus I said,
When o'er thy perch the leaves were spread;
Sweet was thy song, but sweeter now
Thy carol on the leafless bough.
  Sing, little bird! thy note shall cheer
  The sadness of the dying year.

When violets pranked the turf with blue
And morning filled their cups with dew,
Thy slender voice with rippling trill
The budding April bowers would fill,

Nor passed its joyous tones away
When April rounded into May :
Thy life shall hail no second dawn, —
  Sing, little bird ! the spring is gone.

And I remember — well-a-day ! —
Thy full-blown summer roundelay,
As when behind a broidered screen
Some holy maiden sings unseen :
With answering notes the woodland rung,
And every tree-top found a tongue.
How deep the shade ! the groves how fair !
  Sing, little bird ! the woods are bare.

The summer's throbbing chant is done
And mute the choral antiphon ;
The birds have left the shivering pines
To flit among the trellised vines,
Or fan the air with scented plumes
Amid the love-sick orange-blooms,
And thou art here alone, — alone, —
  Sing, little bird ! the rest have flown.

The snow has capped yon distant hill,
At morn the running brook was still,

From driven herds the clouds that rise
Are like the smoke of sacrifice ;
Erelong the frozen sod shall mock
The ploughshare, changed to stubborn rock,
The brawling streams shall soon be dumb, —
  Sing, little bird ! the frosts have come.

Fast, fast the lengthening shadows creep,
The songless fowls are half asleep,
The air grows chill, the setting sun
May leave thee ere thy song is done,
The pulse that warms thy breast grow cold,
Thy secret die with thee, untold :
The lingering sunset still is bright, —
  Sing, little bird ! 't will soon be night.

1874.

BILL AND JOE.

Come, dear old comrade, you and I
Will steal an hour from days gone by, —
The shining days when life was new,
And all was bright with morning dew, —
The lusty days of long ago,
When you were Bill and I was Joe.

Your name may flaunt a titled trail
Proud as a cockerel's rainbow tail,
And mine as brief appendix wear
As Tam O'Shanter's luckless mare;
To-day, old friend, remember still
That I am Joe and you are Bill.

You 've won the great world's envied prize,
And grand you look in people's eyes,
With H O N. and L L. D.
In big brave letters, fair to see, —

Your fist, old fellow! off they go! —
How are you, Bill? How are you, Joe?

You 've worn the judge's ermined robe;
You 've taught your name to half the globe;
You 've sung mankind a deathless strain;
You 've made the dead past live again:
The world may call you what it will,
But you and I are Joe and Bill.

The chaffing young folks stare and say
"See those old buffers, bent and gray, —
They talk like fellows in their teens!
Mad, poor old boys! That 's what it means," —
And shake their heads; they little know
The throbbing hearts of Bill and Joe! —

How Bill forgets his hour of pride,
While Joe sits smiling at his side;
How Joe, in spite of time's disguise,
Finds the old schoolmate in his eyes, —
Those calm, stern eyes that melt and fill
As Joe looks fondly up at Bill.

Ah, pensive scholar, what is fame?
A fitful tongue of leaping flame;

A giddy whirlwind's fickle gust,
That lifts a pinch of mortal dust;
A few swift years, and who can show
Which dust was Bill and which was Joe?

The weary idol takes his stand,
Holds out his bruised and aching hand,
While gaping thousands come and go, —
How vain it seems, this empty show!
Till all at once his pulses thrill; —
'T is poor old Joe's "God bless you, Bill!"

And shall we breathe in happier spheres
The names that pleased our mortal ears,
In some sweet lull of harp and song
For earth-born spirits none too long,
Just whispering of the world below
Where this was Bill, and that was Joe?

No matter; while our home is here
No sounding name is half so dear;
When fades at length our lingering day,
Who cares what pompous tombstones say?
Read on the hearts that love us still,
Hic jacet Joe. *Hic jacet* Bill.

1868.

DOROTHY Q.

A FAMILY PORTRAIT.

GRANDMOTHER'S mother: her age, I guess,
Thirteen summers, or something less;
Girlish bust, but womanly air,
Smooth, square forehead with uprolled hair,
Lips that lover has never kissed,
Taper fingers and slender wrist,
Hanging sleeves of stiff brocade, —
So they painted the little maid.

On her hand a parrot green
Sits unmoving and broods serene.
Hold up the canvas full in view, —
Look! there 's a rent the light shines through,
Dark with a century's fringe of dust, —
That was a Red-Coat's rapier-thrust!

Such is the tale the lady old,
Dorothy's daughter's daughter, told.

Who the painter was none may tell, —
One whose best was not over well;
Hard and dry, it must be confessed,
Flat as a rose that has long been pressed;
Yet in her cheek the hues are bright,
Dainty colors of red and white,
And in her slender shape are seen
Hint and promise of stately mien.

Look not on her with eyes of scorn, —
Dorothy Q. was a lady born!
Ay! since the galloping Normans came,
England's annals have known her name;
And still to the three-hilled rebel town
Dear is that ancient name's renown,
For many a civic wreath they won,
The youthful sire and the gray-haired son.

O Damsel Dorothy! Dorothy Q.!
Strange is the gift that I owe to you;
Such a gift as never a king
Save to daughter or son might bring, —

All my tenure of heart and hand,
All my title to house and land;
Mother and sister and child and wife
And joy and sorrow and death and life!

What if a hundred years ago
Those close-shut lips had answered No,
When forth the tremulous question came
That cost the maiden her Norman name,
And under the folds that look so still
The bodice swelled with the bosom's thrill?
Should I be I, or would it be
One tenth another, to nine tenths me?

Soft is the breath of a maiden's YES:
Not the light gossamer stirs with less;
But never a cable that holds so fast
Through all the battles of wave and blast,
And never an echo of speech or song
That lives in the babbling air so long!
There were tones in the voice that whispered then
You may hear to-day in a hundred men.

O lady and lover, how faint and far
Your images hover, — and here we are,

Solid and stirring in flesh and bone, —
Edward's and Dorothy's — all their own, —
A goodly record for Time to show
Of a syllable spoken so long ago! —
Shall I bless you, Dorothy, or forgive
For the tender whisper that bade me live?

It shall be a blessing, my little maid!
I will heal the stab of the Red-Coat's blade,
And freshen the gold of the tarnished frame,
And gild with a rhyme your household name;
So you shall smile on us brave and bright
As first you greeted the morning's light,
And live untroubled by woes and fears
Through a second youth of a hundred years.

1871.

THE ORGAN-BLOWER.

Devoutest of my Sunday friends,
The patient Organ-blower bends;
I see his figure sink and rise,
(Forgive me, Heaven, my wandering eyes!)
A moment lost, the next half seen,
His head above the scanty screen,
Still measuring out his deep salaams
Through quavering hymns and panting psalms.

No priest that prays in gilded stole,
To save a rich man's mortgaged soul;
No sister, fresh from holy vows,
So humbly stoops, so meekly bows;
His large obeisance puts to shame
The proudest genuflecting dame,
Whose Easter bonnet low descends
With all the grace devotion lends.

O brother with the supple spine,
How much we owe those bows of thine!
Without thine arm to lend the breeze,
How vain the finger on the keys!
Though all unmatched the player's skill,
Those thousand throats were dumb and still:
Another's art may shape the tone,
The breath that fills it is thine own.

Six days the silent Memnon waits
Behind his temple's folded gates;
But when the seventh day's sunshine falls
Through rainbowed windows on the walls,
He breathes, he sings, he shouts, he fills
The quivering air with rapturous thrills;
The roof resounds, the pillars shake,
And all the slumbering echoes wake!

The Preacher from the Bible-text
With weary words my soul has vexed
(Some stranger, fumbling far astray
To find the lesson for the day);
He tells us truths too plainly true,
And reads the service all askew, —

Why, why the — mischief — can't he look
Beforehand in the service-book?

But thou, with decent mien and face,
Art always ready in thy place;
Thy strenuous blast, whate'er the tune,
As steady as the strong monsoon;
Thy only dread a leathery creak,
Or small residual extra squeak,
To send along the shadowy aisles
A sunlit wave of dimpled smiles.

Not all the preaching, O my friend,
Comes from the church's pulpit end!
Not all that bend the knee and bow
Yield service half so true as thou!
One simple task performed aright,
With slender skill, but all thy might,
Where honest labor does its best,
And leaves the player all the rest.

This many-diapasoned maze,
Through which the breath of being strays,
Whose music makes our earth divine,
Has work for mortal hands like mine.

My duty lies before me. Lo,
The lever there! Take hold and blow!
And He whose hand is on the keys
Will play the tune as He shall please.

1872.

HOMESICK IN HEAVEN.

FROM "THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE."

THE DIVINE VOICE.

Go seek thine earth-born sisters, — thus the Voice
That all obey, — the sad and silent three;
These only, while the hosts of Heaven rejoice,
Smile never: ask them what their sorrows be:

And when the secret of their griefs they tell,
Look on them with thy mild, half-human eyes;
Say what thou wast on earth; thou knowest well;
So shall they cease from unavailing sighs.

THE ANGEL.

— Why thus, apart, — the swift-winged herald spake, —
Sit ye with silent lips and unstrung lyres
While the trisagion's blending chords awake
In shouts of joy from all the heavenly choirs?

THE FIRST SPIRIT.

—Chide not thy sisters, — thus the answer came; —
Children of earth, our half-weaned nature clings
To earth's fond memories, and her whispered name
Untunes our quivering lips, our saddened strings;

For there we loved, and where we love is home,
Home that our feet may leave, but not our hearts,
Though o'er us shine the jasper-lighted dome: —
The chain may lengthen, but it never parts!

Sometimes a sunlit sphere comes rolling by,
And then we softly whisper, — *can it be?*
And leaning toward the silvery orb, we try
To hear the music of its murmuring sea;

To catch, perchance, some flashing glimpse of green,
Or breathe some wild-wood fragrance, wafted through
The opening gates of pearl, that fold between
The blinding splendors and the changeless blue.

THE ANGEL.

—Nay, sister, nay! a single healing leaf
Plucked from the bough of yon twelve-fruited tree,

Would soothe such anguish, — deeper stabbing grief
Has pierced thy throbbing heart —

THE FIRST SPIRIT.

— Ah, woe is me!

I from my clinging babe was rudely torn;
His tender lips a loveless bosom pressed;
Can I forget him in my life new born?
O that my darling lay upon my breast!

THE ANGEL.

— And thou? —

THE SECOND SPIRIT.

I was a fair and youthful bride,
The kiss of love still burns upon my cheek,
He whom I worshipped, ever at my side, —
Him through the spirit realm in vain I seek.

Sweet faces turn their beaming eyes on mine;
Ah! not in those the wished-for look I read;
Still for that one dear human smile I pine;
Thou and none other! — is the lover's creed.

THE ANGEL.

— And whence *thy* sadness in a world of bliss
Where never parting comes, nor mourner's tear?
Art thou, too, dreaming of a mortal's kiss
Amid the seraphs of the heavenly sphere?

THE THIRD SPIRIT.

— Nay, tax not me with passion's wasting fire;
When the swift message set my spirit free,
Blind, helpless, lone, I left my gray-haired sire;
My friends were many, he had none save me.

I left him, orphaned, in the starless night;
Alas, for him no cheerful morning's dawn!
I wear the ransomed spirit's robe of white,
Yet still I hear him moaning, *She is gone!*

THE ANGEL.

— Ye know me not, sweet sisters? — All in vain
Ye seek your lost ones in the shapes they wore;
The flower once opened may not bud again,
The fruit once fallen finds the stem no more.

Child, lover, sire, — you, all things loved below, —
Fair pictures damasked on a vapor's fold, —

Fade like the roseate flush, the golden glow,
When the bright curtain of the day is rolled.

I was the babe that slumbered on *thy* breast.
— And, sister, mine the lips that called *thee* bride.
— Mine were the silvered locks *thy* hand caressed,
That faithful hand, my faltering footstep's guide!

Each changing form, frail vesture of decay,
The soul unclad forgets it once hath worn,
Stained with the travel of the weary day,
And shamed with rents from every wayside thorn.

To lie, an infant, in *thy* fond embrace, —
To come with love's warm kisses back to *thee*, —
To show *thine* eyes thy gray-haired father's face,
Not Heaven itself could grant; this may not be!

Then spread your folded wings, and leave to earth
The dust once breathing ye have mourned so long,
Till Love, new risen, owns his heavenly birth,
And sorrow's discords sweeten into song!

1872.

FANTASIA.

THE "YOUNG GIRL'S" POEM.

FROM "THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE."

Kiss mine eyelids, beauteous Morn,
Blushing into life new-born!
Lend me violets for my hair,
And thy russet robe to wear,
And thy ring of rosiest hue
Set in drops of diamond dew!

Kiss my cheek, thou noontide ray,
From my Love so far away!
Let thy splendor streaming down
Turn its pallid lilies brown,
Till its darkening shades reveal
Where his passion pressed its seal!

Kiss my lips, thou Lord of light,
Kiss my lips a soft good night!
Westward sinks thy golden car;
Leave me but the evening star,
And my solace that shall be,
Borrowing all its light from thee!

1872.

AUNT TABITHA.

THE "YOUNG GIRL'S" POEM.

FROM "THE POET AT THE BREAKFAST-TABLE."

Whatever I do, and whatever I say,
Aunt Tabitha tells me that is n't the way;
When *she* was a girl (forty summers ago)
Aunt Tabitha tells me they never did so.

Dear Aunt! If I only would take her advice!
But I like my own way, and I find it *so* nice!
And besides, I forget half the things I am told;
But they all will come back to me — when I am old.

If a youth passes by, it may happen, no doubt,
He may chance to look in as I chance to look out;
She would never endure an impertinent stare, —
It is *horrid*, she says, and I must n't sit there.

A walk in the moonlight has pleasures, I own,
But it is n't quite safe to be walking alone;
So I take a lad's arm, — just for safety, you know, —
But Aunt Tabitha tells me *they* did n't do so.

How wicked we are, and how good they were then!
They kept at arm's length those detestable men;
What an era of virtue she lived in! — But stay —
Were the *men* all such rogues in Aunt Tabitha's day?

If the men *were* so wicked, I 'll ask my papa
How he dared to propose to my darling mamma;
Was he like the rest of them? Goodness! Who knows?
And what shall *I* say, if a wretch should propose?

I am thinking if Aunt knew so little of sin,
What a wonder Aunt Tabitha's aunt must have been!
And her grand-aunt — it scares me — how shockingly sad
That we girls of to-day are so frightfully bad!

A martyr will save us, and nothing else can;
Let *me* perish — to rescue some wretched young man!
Though when to the altar a victim I go,
Aunt Tabitha 'll tell me *she* never did so!

1872.

AT THE PANTOMIME.

The house was crammed from roof to floor,
Heads piled on heads at every door;
Half dead with August's seething heat
I crowded on and found my seat,
My patience slightly out of joint,
My temper short of boiling-point,
Not quite at *Hate mankind as such*,
Nor yet at *Love them overmuch*.

Amidst the throng the pageant drew
Were gathered Hebrews not a few,
Black-bearded, swarthy, — at their side
Dark, jewelled women, orient-eyed;
If scarce a Christian hopes for grace
That crowds one in his narrow place

What will the savage victim do
Whose ribs are kneaded by a Jew?

Next on my left a breathing form
Wedged up against me, close and warm;
The beak that crowned the bistred face
Betrayed the mould of Abraham's race, —
That coal-black hair, that smoke-brown hue, —
Ah, cursèd, unbelieving Jew!
I started, shuddering, to the right,
And squeezed — a second Israelite!

Then woke the evil brood of rage
That slumber, tongueless, in their cage;
I stabbed in turn with silent oaths
The hook-nosed kite of carrion clothes,
The shaky usurer, him that crawls
And cheats beneath the golden balls,
Moses and Levi, all the horde,
Spawn of the race that slew its Lord.

Up came their murderous deeds of old,
The grisly story Chaucer told,
And many an ugly tale beside
Of children caught and crucified;

I heard the ducat-sweating thieves
Beneath the Ghetto's slouching eaves,
And, thrust beyond the tented green,
The lepers cry, "Unclean! Unclean!"

The show went on, but, ill at ease,
My sullen eye it could not please,
In vain my conscience whispered, "Shame!
Who but their Maker is to blame?"
I thought of Judas and his bribe,
And steeled my soul against their tribe:
My neighbors stirred; I looked again
Full on the younger of the twain.

A fresh young cheek whose olive hue
The mantling blood shows faintly through;
Locks dark as midnight, that divide
And shade the neck on either side;
Soft, gentle, loving eyes that gleam
Clear as a starlit mountain stream;—
So looked that other child of Shem,
The Maiden's Boy of Bethlehem!

—And thou couldst scorn the peerless blood
That flows unmingled from the Flood,

Thy scutcheon spotted with the stains
Of Norman thieves and pirate Danes!
The New World's foundling, in thy pride
Scowl on the Hebrew at thy side,
And lo! the very semblance there
The Lord of Glory deigned to wear!

I see that radiant image rise,
The flowing hair, the pitying eyes,
The faintly crimsoned cheek that shows
The blush of Sharon's opening rose,—
Thy hands would clasp his hallowed feet
Whose brethren soil thy Christian seat,
Thy lips would press his garment's hem
That curl in wrathful scorn for them!

A sudden mist, a watery screen,
Dropped like a veil before the scene;
The shadow floated from my soul,
And to my lips a whisper stole,—
"Thy prophets caught the Spirit's flame,
From thee the Son of Mary came,
With thee the Father deigned to dwell,—
Peace be upon thee, Israel!"

18—. Rewritten 1874.

AFTER THE FIRE.

WHILE far along the eastern sky
I saw the flags of Havoc fly,
As if his forces would assault
The sovereign of the starry vault
And hurl Him back the burning rain
That scared the cities of the plain,
I read as on a crimson page
The words of Israel's sceptred sage: —

For riches make them wings, and they
Do as an eagle fly away.

O vision of that sleepless night,
What hue shall paint the mocking light
That burned and stained the orient skies
Where peaceful morning loves to rise,

As if the sun had lost his way
And dawned to make a second day, —
Above how red with fiery glow,
How dark to those it woke below!

On roof and wall, on dome and spire,
Flashed the false jewels of the fire;
Girt with her belt of glittering panes,
And crowned with starry-gleaming vanes,
Our northern queen in glory shone
With new-born splendors not her own,
And stood, transfigured in our eyes,
A victim decked for sacrifice!

The cloud still hovers overhead,
And still the midnight sky is red;
As the lost wanderer strays alone
To seek the place he called his own,
His devious footprints sadly tell
How changed the pathways known so well;
The scene, how new! The tale, how old
Ere yet the ashes have grown cold!

Again I read the words that came
Writ in the rubric of the flame:

However we trust to mortal things,
Each hath its pair of folded wings;
Though long their terrors rest unspread,
Their fatal plumes are never shed;
At last, at last, they stretch in flight,
And blot the day and blast the night!

Hope, only Hope, of all that clings
Around us, never spreads her wings;
Love, though he break his earthly chain,
Still whispers he will come again;
But Faith that soars to seek the sky
Shall teach our half-fledged souls to fly,
And find, beyond the smoke and flame,
The cloudless azure whence they came!

1872.

A BALLAD OF THE BOSTON TEA-PARTY.

No! never such a draught was poured
  Since Hebe served with nectar
The bright Olympians and their Lord,
  Her over-kind protector, —
Since Father Noah squeezed the grape
  And took to such behaving
As would have shamed our grandsire ape
  Before the days of shaving, —
No! ne'er was mingled such a draught
  In palace, hall, or arbor,
As freemen brewed and tyrants quaffed
  That night in Boston Harbor!
It kept King George so long awake
  His brain at last got addled,
It made the nerves of Britain shake,
  With seven-score millions saddled;

Before that bitter cup was drained,
Amid the roar of cannon,
The Western war-cloud's crimson stained
The Thames, the Clyde, the Shannon;
Full many a six-foot grenadier
The flattened grass had measured,
And many a mother many a year
Her tearful memories treasured;
Fast spread the tempest's darkening pall,
The mighty realms were troubled,
The storm broke loose, but first of all
The Boston teapot bubbled!

An evening party, — only that,
No formal invitation,
No gold-laced coat, no stiff cravat,
No feast in contemplation,
No silk-robed dames, no fiddling band,
No flowers, no songs, no dancing, —
A tribe of Red men, axe in hand, —
Behold the guests advancing!
How fast the stragglers join the throng,
From stall and workshop gathered!
The lively barber skips along
And leaves a chin half-lathered;

The smith has flung his hammer down, —
The horseshoe still is glowing;
The truant tapster at the Crown
Has left a beer-cask flowing;
The cooper's boys have dropped the adze,
And trot behind their master;
Up run the tarry ship-yard lads, —
The crowd is hurrying faster, —
Out from the Millpond's purlieus gush
The streams of white-faced millers,
And down their slippery alleys rush
The lusty young Fort-Hillers;
The ropewalk lends its 'prentice crew, —
The tories seize the omen:
"Ay, boys, you 'll soon have work to do
For England's rebel foemen,
'King Hancock,' Adams, and their gang,
That fire the mob with treason, —
When these we shoot and those we hang
The town will come to reason."

On — on to where the tea-ships ride!
And now their ranks are forming, —
A rush, and up the Dartmouth's side
The Mohawk band is swarming!

See the fierce natives! What a glimpse
Of paint and fur and feather,
As all at once the full-grown imps
Light on the deck together!
A scarf the pigtail's secret keeps,
A blanket hides the breeches, —
And out the cursèd cargo leaps,
And overboard it pitches!

O woman, at the evening board
So gracious, sweet, and purring,
So happy while the tea is poured,
So blest while spoons are stirring,
What martyr can compare with thee,
The mother, wife, or daughter,
That night, instead of best Bohea,
Condemned to milk and water!

Ah, little dreams the quiet dame
Who plies with rock and spindle
The patient flax, how great a flame
Yon little spark shall kindle!
The lurid morning shall reveal
A fire no king can smother
Where British flint and Boston steel
Have clashed against each other!

Old charters shrivel in its track,
His Worship's bench has crumbled,
It climbs and clasps the union-jack, —
Its blazoned pomp is humbled,
The flags go down on land and sea
Like corn before the reapers;
So burned the fire that brewed the tea
That Boston served her keepers!

The waves that wrought a century's wreck
Have rolled o'er whig and tory, —
The Mohawks on the Dartmouth's deck
Still live in song and story,
The waters in the rebel bay
Have kept the tea-leaf savor, —
Our old North-Enders in their spray
Still taste a Hyson flavor;
And Freedom's teacup still o'erflows
With ever fresh libations,
To cheat of slumber all her foes
And cheer the wakening nations!

1874.

EPILOGUE TO THE BREAKFAST-TABLE SERIES.

AUTOCRAT — PROFESSOR — POET.

AT A BOOKSTORE.

Anno Domini 1972.

A CRAZY bookcase, placed before
A low-price dealer's open door;
Therein arrayed in broken rows
A ragged crew of rhyme and prose,
The homeless vagrants, waifs and strays
Whose low estate this line betrays
(Set forth the lesser birds to lime):
YOUR CHOICE AMONG THESE BOOKS, 1 DIME!

Ho! dealer; for its motto's sake
This scarecrow from the shelf I take;
Three starveling volumes bound in one,
Its covers warping in the sun.

Methinks it hath a musty smell,
I like its flavor none too well,
But Yorick's brain was far from dull,
Though Hamlet pah! 'd, and dropped his skull.

Why, here comes rain! The sky grows dark, —
Was that the roll of thunder? Hark!
The shop affords a safe retreat,
A chair extends its welcome seat,
The tradesman has a civil look
(I 've paid, impromptu, for my book),
The clouds portend a sudden shower, —
I 'll read my purchase for an hour.

. . . . . .

What have I rescued from the shelf?
A Boswell, writing out himself!
For though he changes dress and name,
The man beneath is still the same,
Laughing or sad, by fits and starts,
One actor in a dozen parts,
And whatsoe'er the mask may be,
The voice assures us, *This is he.*

I say not this to cry him down;
I find my Shakespeare in his clown,
His rogues the self-same parent own;

Nay! Satan talks in Milton's tone!
Where'er the ocean inlet strays,
The salt sea wave its source betrays,
Where'er the queen of summer blows,
She tells the zephyr, "I 'm the rose!"

And his is not the playwright's page;
His table does not ape the stage;
What matter if the figures seen
Are only shadows on a screen,
He finds in them his lurking thought,
And on their lips the words he sought,
Like one who sits before the keys
And plays a tune himself to please.

And was he noted in his day?
Read, flattered, honored? Who shall say?
Poor wreck of time the wave has cast
To find a peaceful shore at last,
Once glorying in thy gilded name
And freighted deep with hopes of fame,
Thy leaf is moistened with a tear,
The first for many a long, long year!

For be it more or less of art
That veils the lowliest human heart

Where passion throbs, where friendship glows,
Where pity's tender tribute flows,
Where love has lit its fragrant fire,
And sorrow quenched its vain desire,
For me the altar is divine,
Its flame, its ashes, — all are mine!

And thou, my brother, as I look
And see thee pictured in thy book,
Thy years on every page confessed
In shadows lengthening from the west,
Thy glance that wanders, as it sought
Some freshly opening flower of thought,
Thy hopeful nature, light and free,
I start to find myself in thee!

. . . . .

Come, vagrant, outcast, wretch forlorn
In leather jerkin stained and torn,
Whose talk has filled my idle hour
And made me half forget the shower,
I 'll do at least as much for you,
Your coat I 'll patch, your gilt renew,
Read you — perhaps — some other time.
Not bad, my bargain! Price one dime!

1872.

NEARING THE SNOW-LINE.

SLOW toiling upward from the misty vale,
I leave the bright enamelled zones below;
No more for me their beauteous bloom shall glow,
Their lingering sweetness load the morning gale;
Few are the slender flowerets, scentless, pale,
That on their ice-clad stems all trembling blow
Along the margin of unmelting snow;
Yet with unsaddened voice thy verge I hail,
White realm of peace above the flowering line;
Welcome thy frozen domes, thy rocky spires!
O'er thee undimmed the moon-girt planets shine,
On thy majestic altars fade the fires
That filled the air with smoke of vain desires,
And all the unclouded blue of heaven is thine!

1870.

IN WAR TIME.

TO CANAAN.

A PURITAN WAR-SONG.

WHERE are you going, soldiers,
With banner, gun, and sword?
We 're marching South to Canaan
To battle for the Lord!
What Captain leads your armies
Along the rebel coasts?
The Mighty One of Israel,
His name is Lord of Hosts!
To Canaan, to Canaan
The Lord has led us forth,
To blow before the heathen walls
The trumpets of the North!

What flag is this you carry
Along the sea and shore?
The same our grandsires lifted up, —

The same our fathers bore!
In many a battle's tempest
It shed the crimson rain, —
What God has woven in his loom
Let no man rend in twain!
To Canaan, to Canaan
The Lord has led us forth,
To plant upon the rebel towers
The banners of the North!

What troop is this that follows,
All armed with picks and spades? *
These are the swarthy bondsmen, —
The iron-skin brigades!
They 'll pile up Freedom's breastwork,
They 'll scoop out rebels' graves;
Who then will be their owner
And march them off for slaves?
To Canaan, to Canaan
The Lord has led us forth,
To strike upon the captive's chain
The hammers of the North!

What song is this you 're singing?
The same that Israel sung

* The captured slaves were at this time organised as pioneers.

When Moses led the mighty choir,
And Miriam's timbrel rung!
To Canaan! To Canaan!
The priests and maidens cried:
To Canaan! To Canaan!
The people's voice replied.
To Canaan, to Canaan
The Lord has led us forth,
To thunder through its adder dens
The anthems of the North!

When Canaan's hosts are scattered,
And all her walls lie flat,
What follows next in order?
— The Lord will see to that!
We 'll break the tyrant's sceptre, —
We 'll build the people's throne, —
When half the world is Freedom's,
Then all the world's our own!
To Canaan, to Canaan
The Lord has led us forth,
To sweep the rebel threshing-floors,
A whirlwind from the North!

August 12, 1862.

"THUS SAITH THE LORD, I OFFER THEE THREE THINGS."

In poisonous dens, where traitors hide
  Like bats that fear the day,
While all the land our charters claim
Is sweating blood and breathing flame,
Dead to their country's woe and shame,
  The recreants whisper STAY!

In peaceful homes, where patriot fires
  On Love's own altars glow,
The mother hides her trembling fear,
The wife, the sister, checks a tear,
To breathe the parting word of cheer,
  Soldier of Freedom, GO!

In halls where Luxury lies at ease,
  And Mammon keeps his state,

Where flatterers fawn and menials crouch,
The dreamer, startled from his couch,
Wrings a few counters from his pouch,
  And murmurs faintly WAIT!

In weary camps, on trampled plains
  That ring with fife and drum,
The battling host, whose harness gleams
Along the crimson-flowing streams,
Calls, like a warning voice in dreams,
  We want you, Brother! COME!

Choose ye whose bidding ye will do, —
  To go, to wait, to stay!
Sons of the Freedom-loving town,
Heirs of the Fathers' old renown,
The servile yoke, the civic crown,
  Await your choice TO-DAY!

The stake is laid! O gallant youth
  With yet unsilvered brow,
If Heaven should lose and Hell should win,
On whom shall lie the mortal sin,
That cries aloud, *It might have been!*
  God calls you — answer NOW.

1862.

"CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE."

Yes, tyrants, you hate us, and fear while you hate
The self-ruling, chain-breaking, throne-shaking State!
The night-birds dread morning, — your instinct is true, —
The day-star of Freedom brings midnight for you!

Why plead with the deaf for the cause of mankind?
The owl hoots at noon that the eagle is blind;
We ask not your reasons, — 't were wasting our time, —
Our life is a menace, our welfare a crime!

We have battles to fight, we have foes to subdue, —
Time waits not for us, and we wait not for you;
The mower mows on, though the adder may writhe
And the copper-head coil round the blade of his scythe!

"No sides in this quarrel," your statesmen may urge,
Of school-house and wages with slave-pen and scourge!—
No sides in the quarrel! proclaim it as well
To the angels that fight with the legions of hell!

They kneel in God's temple, the North and the South,
With blood on each weapon and prayers in each mouth,
Whose cry shall be answered? Ye Heavens, attend
The lords of the lash as their voices ascend!

"O Lord, we are shaped in the image of thee, —
Smite down the base millions that claim to be free,
And lend thy strong arm to the soft-handed race
Who eat *not* their bread in the sweat of their face!"

So pleads the proud planter. What echoes are these?
The bay of his bloodhound is borne on the breeze,
And, lost in the shriek of his victim's despair,
His voice dies unheard. — Hear the Puritan's prayer!

"O Lord, that didst smother mankind in thy flood,
The sun is as sackcloth, the moon is as blood,
The stars fall to earth as untimely are cast
The figs from the fig-tree that shakes in the blast;

"All nations, all tribes in whose nostrils is breath,
Stand gazing at Sin as she travails with Death;
Lord, strangle the monster that struggles to birth,
Or mock us no more with thy 'Kingdom on Earth'!

"If Ammon and Moab must reign in the land
Thou gavest thine Israel, fresh from thy hand,
Call Baal and Ashtaroth out of their graves
To be the new gods for the empire of slaves!"

Whose God will ye serve, O ye rulers of men?
Will ye build you new shrines in the slave-breeder's den,
Or bow with the children of light, as they call
On the Judge of the Earth and the Father of All?

Choose wisely, choose quickly, for time moves apace, —
Each day is an age in the life of our race;
Lord, lead them in love, ere they hasten in fear
From the fast-rising flood that shall girdle the sphere!

1863.

NEVER OR NOW!

AN APPEAL.

Listen, young heroes! your country is calling!
Time strikes the hour for the brave and the true!
Now, while the foremost are fighting and falling,
Fill up the ranks that have opened for you!

You whom the fathers made free and defended,
Stain not the scroll that emblazons their fame!
You whose fair heritage spotless descended,
Leave not your children a birthright of shame!

Stay not for questions while Freedom stands gasping!
Wait not till Honor lies wrapped in his pall!
Brief the lips' meeting be, swift the hands' clasping, —
"Off for the wars!" is enough for them all!

Break from the arms that would fondly caress you!
Hark! 't is the bugle-blast, sabres are drawn!
Mothers shall pray for you, fathers shall bless you,
Maidens shall weep for you when you are gone!

Never or now! cries the blood of a nation,
Poured on the turf where the red rose should bloom;
Now is the day and the hour of salvation, —
Never or now! peals the trumpet of doom!

Never or now! roars the hoarse-throated cannon
Through the black canopy blotting the skies;
Never or now! flaps the shell-blasted pennon
O'er the deep ooze where the Cumberland lies!

From the foul dens where our brothers are dying,
Aliens and foes in the land of their birth, —
From the rank swamps where our martyrs are lying
Pleading in vain for a handful of earth, —

From the hot plains where they perish outnumbered,
Furrowed and ridged by the battle-field's plough,
Comes the loud summons; too long you have slumbered,
Hear the last Angel-trump, — Never or Now!

1862.

THE LAST CHARGE.

Now, men of the North! will you join in the strife
For country, for freedom, for honor, for life?
The giant grows blind in his fury and spite, —
One blow on his forehead will settle the fight!

Flash full in his eyes the blue lightning of steel,
And stun him with cannon-bolts, peal upon peal!
Mount, troopers, and follow your game to its lair,
As the hound tracks the wolf and the beagle the hare!

Blow, trumpets, your summons, till sluggards awake!
Beat, drums, till the roofs of the faint-hearted shake!
Yet, yet, ere the signet is stamped on the scroll,
Their names may be traced on the blood-sprinkled roll!

Trust not the false herald that painted your shield:
True honor *to-day* must be sought on the field!
Her scutcheon shows white with a blazon of red, —
The life-drops of crimson for liberty shed!

The hour is at hand, and the moment draws nigh;
The dog-star of treason grows dim in the sky;
Shine forth from the battle-cloud, light of the morn,
Call back the bright hour when the Nation was born!

The rivers of peace through our valleys shall run,
As the glaciers of tyranny melt in the sun;
Smite, smite the proud parricide down from his throne, —
His sceptre once broken, the world is our own!

1864.

ONE COUNTRY.

One country! Treason's writhing asp
Struck madly at her girdle's clasp,
And Hatred wrenched with might and main
To rend its welded links in twain,
While Mammon hugged his golden calf
Content to take one broken half,
While thankless churls stood idly by
And heard unmoved a nation's cry!

One country! "Nay," — the tyrant crew
Shrieked from their dens, — "it shall be two!
Ill bodes to us this monstrous birth
That scowls on all the thrones of earth,
Too broad yon starry cluster shines,
Too proudly tower the New-World pines,
Tear down the 'banner of the free,'
And cleave their land from sea to sea!"

One country still, though foe and "friend"
Our seamless empire strove to rend;
Safe! safe! though all the fiends of hell
Join the red murderers' battle-yell!
What though the lifted sabres gleam,
The cannons frown by shore and stream, —
The sabres clash, the cannons thrill,
In wild accord, One country still!

One country! in her stress and strain
We heard the breaking of a chain!
Look where the conquering Nation swings
Her iron flail, — its shivered rings!
Forged by the rebels' crimson hand,
That bolt of wrath shall scourge the land
Till Peace proclaims on sea and shore
One Country now and evermore!

1865.

SHERMAN 'S IN SAVANNAH!

A HALF-RHYMED IMPROMPTU.

Like the tribes of Israel,
Fed on quails and manna,
Sherman and his glorious band
Journeyed through the rebel land,
Fed from Heaven's all-bounteous hand,
Marching on Savannah!

As the moving pillar shone,
Streamed the starry banner
All day long in rosy light,
Flaming splendor all the night,
Till it swooped in eagle flight
Down on doomed Savannah!

Glory be to God on high!
Shout the loud Hosanna!

Treason's wilderness is past,
Canaan's shore is won at last,
Peal a nation's trumpet-blast, —
Sherman 's in Savannah!

Soon shall Richmond's tough old hide
Find a tough old tanner!
Soon from every rebel wall
Shall the rag of treason fall,
Till our banner flaps o'er all
As it crowns Savannah!

1865.

GOD SAVE THE FLAG!

Washed in the blood of the brave and the blooming,
Snatched from the altars of insolent foes,
Burning with star-fires, but never consuming,
Flash its broad ribbons of lily and rose.

Vainly the prophets of Baal would rend it,
Vainly his worshippers pray for its fall;
Thousands have died for it, millions defend it,
Emblem of justice and mercy to all:

Justice that reddens the sky with her terrors,
Mercy that comes with her white-handed train,
Soothing all passions, redeeming all errors,
Sheathing the sabre and breaking the chain.

Borne on the deluge of old usurpations,
Drifted our Ark o'er the desolate seas;
Bearing the rainbow of hope to the nations,
Torn from the storm-cloud and flung to the breeze!

God bless the Flag and its loyal defenders,
While its broad folds o'er the battle-field wave,
Till the dim star-wreath rekindle its splendors,
Washed from its stains in the blood of the brave!

1865.

HYMN

AFTER THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION.

Giver of all that crowns our days,
With grateful hearts we sing thy praise;
Through deep and desert led by thee,
Our promised land at last we see.

Ruler of Nations, judge our cause!
If we have kept thy holy laws,
The sons of Belial curse in vain
The day that rends the captive's chain.

Thou God of vengeance! Israel's Lord!
Break in their grasp the shield and sword,
And make thy righteous judgments known
Till all thy foes are overthrown!

Then, Father, lay thy healing hand
In mercy on our stricken land;
Lead all its wanderers to the fold,
And be their Shepherd as of old.

So shall one Nation's song ascend
To thee, our Ruler, Father, Friend,
While Heaven's wide arch resounds again
With Peace on earth, good-will to men!

1865.

HYMN

FOR THE FAIR AT CHICAGO.

O God! in danger's darkest hour,
In battle's deadliest field,
Thy name has been our Nation's tower,
Thy truth her help and shield.

Our lips should fill the air with praise,
Nor pay the debt we owe,
So high above the songs we raise
The floods of mercy flow.

Yet thou wilt hear the prayer we speak,
The song of praise we sing, —
Thy children, who thine altar seek
Their grateful gifts to bring.

Thine altar is the sufferer's bed,
The home of woe and pain,
The soldier's turfy pillow, red
With battle's crimson rain.

No smoke of burning stains the air,
No incense-clouds arise;
Thy peaceful servants, Lord, prepare
A bloodless sacrifice.

Lo! for our wounded brothers' need,
We bear the wine and oil;
For us they faint, for us they bleed,
For them our gracious toil!

O Father, bless the gifts we bring!
Cause thou thy face to shine,
Till every nation owns her King,
And all the earth is thine.

1865.

SONGS OF WELCOME AND FAREWELL.

AMERICA TO RUSSIA.

READ BY HON. G. V. FOX AT A DINNER GIVEN TO THE MISSION FROM THE UNITED STATES, ST. PETERSBURG, AUGUST 5, 1866.

Though watery deserts hold apart
The worlds of East and West,
Still beats the self-same human heart
In each proud Nation's breast.

Our floating turret tempts the main
And dares the howling blast
To clasp more close the golden chain
That long has bound them fast.

In vain the gales of ocean sweep,
In vain the billows roar
That chafe the wild and stormy steep
Of storied Elsinore.

She comes! She comes! her banners dip
In Neva's flashing tide,
With greetings on her cannon's lip,
The storm-god's iron bride!

Peace garlands with the olive-bough
Her thunder-bearing tower,
And plants before her cleaving prow
The sea-foam's milk-white flower.

No prairies heaped their garnered store
To fill her sunless hold,
Not rich Nevada's gleaming ore
Its hidden caves infold,

But lightly as the sea-bird swings
She floats the depths above,
A breath of flame to lend her wings,
Her freight a people's love!

When darkness hid the starry skies
In war's long winter night,
One ray still cheered our straining eyes,
The far-off Northern light!

And now the friendly rays return
From lights that glow afar,
Those clustered lamps of Heaven that burn
Around the Western Star.

A nation's love in tears and smiles
We bear across the sea,
O Neva of the banded isles,
We moor our hearts in thee!

WELCOME TO THE GRAND DUKE ALEXIS.

MUSIC HALL, DECEMBER 9, 1871.

SUNG TO THE RUSSIAN NATIONAL AIR BY THE CHILDREN OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

SHADOWED so long by the storm-cloud of danger,
Thou whom the prayers of an empire defend,
Welcome, thrice welcome! but not as a stranger,
Come to the nation that calls thee its friend!

Bleak are our shores with the blasts of December,
Fettered and chill is the rivulet's flow;
Throbbing and warm are the hearts that remember
Who was our friend when the world was our foe.

Look on the lips that are smiling to greet thee,
See the fresh flowers that a people has strewn:
Count them thy sisters and brothers that meet thee;
Guest of the Nation, her heart is thine own!

Fires of the North, in eternal communion,
Blend your broad flashes with evening's bright star!
God bless the Empire that loves the Great Union;
Strength to her people! Long life to the Czar!

AT THE BANQUET TO THE GRAND DUKE ALEXIS.

DECEMBER 9, 1871.

ONE word to the guest we have gathered to greet!
The echoes are longing that word to repeat, —
It springs to the lips that are waiting to part,
For its syllables spell themselves first in the heart.

Its accent may vary, its sound may be strange,
But it bears a kind message that nothing can change;
The dwellers by Neva its meaning can tell,
For the smile, its interpreter, shows it full well.

That word! How it gladdened the Pilgrim of yore,
As he stood in the snow on the desolate shore!
When the shout of the Sagamore startled his ear
In the phrase of the Saxon, 't was music to hear!

Ah, little could Samoset offer our sire, —
The cabin, the corn-cake, the seat by the fire;
He had nothing to give, — the poor lord of the land, —
But he gave him a WELCOME, — his heart in his hand!

The tribe of the Sachem has melted away,
But the word that he spoke is remembered to-day,
And the page that is red with the record of shame
The tear-drops have whitened round Samoset's name.

The word that he spoke to the Pilgrim of old
May sound like a tale that has often been told;
But the welcome we speak is as fresh as the dew, —
As the kiss of a lover, that always is new!

Ay, Guest of the Nation! each roof is thine own
Through all the broad continent's star-bannered zone;
From the shore where the curtain of morn is uprolled,
To the billows that flow through the gateway of gold.

The snow-crested mountains are calling aloud;
Nevada to Ural speaks out of the cloud,
And Shasta shouts forth, from his throne in the sky,
To the storm-splintered summits, the peaks of Altai!

You must leave him, they say, till the summer is green!
Both shores are his home, though the waves roll between;
And then we 'll return him, with thanks for the same,
As fresh and as smiling and tall as he came.

But ours is the region of Arctic delight;
We can show him Auroras and pole-stars by night;
There 's a Muscovy sting in the ice-tempered air,
And our firesides are warm and our maidens are fair.

The flowers are full-blown in the garlanded hall, —
They will bloom round his footsteps wherever they fall;
For the splendors of youth and the sunshine they bring
Make the roses believe 't is the summons of Spring.

One word of our language he needs must know well,
But another remains that is harder to spell;
We shall speak it so ill, if he wishes to learn
How we utter *Farewell*, he will have to return!

AT THE BANQUET TO THE CHINESE EMBASSY.

August 21, 1868.

Brothers, whom we may not reach
Through the veil of alien speech,
Welcome! welcome! eyes can tell
What the lips in vain would spell, —
Words that hearts can understand,
Brothers from the Flowery Land!

We, the evening's latest born,
Hail the children of the morn!
We, the new creation's birth,
Greet the lords of ancient earth,
From their storied walls and towers
Wandering to these tents of ours!

Land of wonders, fair Cathay,
Who long hast shunned the staring day,

Hid in mists of poet's dreams
By thy blue and yellow streams, —
Let us thy shadowed form behold, —
Teach us as thou didst of old.

Knowledge dwells with length of days;
Wisdom walks in ancient ways;
Thine the compass that could guide
A nation o'er the stormy tide,
Scourged by passions, doubts, and fears,
Safe through thrice a thousand years!

Looking from thy turrets gray
Thou hast seen the world's decay, —
Egypt drowning in her sands, —
Athens rent by robbers' hands, —
Rome, the wild barbarian's prey,
Like a storm-cloud swept away:

Looking from thy turrets gray
Still we see thee. Where are they?
And lo! a new-born nation waits,
Sitting at the golden gates
That glitter by the sunset sea, —
Waits with outspread arms for thee!

Open wide, ye gates of gold,
To the Dragon's banner-fold!
Builders of the mighty wall,
Bid your mountain barriers fall!
So may the girdle of the sun
Bind the East and West in one,

Till Mount Shasta's breezes fan
The snowy peaks of Ta Sioue-Shan, —
Till Erie blends its waters blue
With the waves of Tung-Ting-Hu, —
Till deep Missouri lends its flow
To swell the rushing Hoang-Ho!

AT THE BANQUET TO THE JAPANESE EMBASSY.

AUGUST 2, 1872.

WE welcome you, Lords of the Land of the Sun!
The voice of the many sounds feebly through one;
Ah! would 't were a voice of more musical tone,
But the dog-star is here, and the song-birds have flown.

And what shall I sing that can cheat you of smiles,
Ye heralds of peace from the Orient isles?
If only the Jubilee — Why did you wait?
You are welcome, but oh! you 're a little too late!

We have greeted our brothers of Ireland and France,
Round the fiddle of Strauss we have joined in the dance,
We have lagered Herr Saro, that fine-looking man,
And glorified Godfrey, whose name it is Dan.

What a pity! we 've missed it and you 've missed it too,
We had a day ready and waiting for you;
We 'd have shown you — provided, of course, you had come —
You 'd have heard — no, you would n't, because it was dumb.

And then the great organ! The chorus's shout!
Like the mixture teetotalers call, "Cold without" —
A mingling of elements, strong, but not sweet;
And the drum, just referred to, that "could n't be beat."

The shrines of our pilgrims are not like your own,
Where white Fusiyama lifts proudly its cone,
(The snow-mantled mountain we see on the fan
That cools our hot cheeks with a breeze from Japan.)

But ours the wide temple where worship is free
As the wind of the prairie, the wave of the sea;
You may build your own altar wherever you will,
For the roof of that temple is over you still.

One dome overarches the star-bannered shore;
You may enter the Pope's or the Puritan's door,
Or pass with the Buddhist his gateway of bronze,
For a priest is but Man, be he bishop or bonze.

And the lesson we teach with the sword and the pen
Is to all of God's children, "We also are men!
If you wrong us we smart, if you prick us we bleed,
If you love us, no quarrel with color or creed!"

You 'll find us a well-meaning, free-spoken crowd,
Good-natured enough, but a little too loud, —
To be sure there is always a bit of a row
When we choose our Tycoon, and especially now.

You 'll take it all calmly, — we want you to see
What a peaceable fight such a contest can be,
And of one thing be certain, however it ends,
You will find that our voters have chosen your friends.

If the horse that stands saddled is first in the race,
You will greet your old friend with the weed in his face,
And if the white hat and the White House agree,
You 'll find H. G. really as loving as he.

But O, what a pity — once more I must say —
That we could not have joined in a "Japanese day"!
Such greeting we give you to-night as we can;
Long life to our brothers and friends of Japan!

The Lord of the mountain looks down from his crest
As the banner of morning unfurls in the West;
The Eagle was always the friend of the Sun;
You are welcome! — The song of the cage-bird is done.

BRYANT'S SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

NOVEMBER 3, 1864.

O EVEN-HANDED Nature! we confess
This life that men so honor, love, and bless
Has filled thine olden measure. Not the less

We count the precious seasons that remain;
Strike not the level of the golden grain,
But heap it high with years, that earth may gain

What heaven can lose, — for heaven is rich in song:
Do not all poets, dying, still prolong
Their broken chants amid the seraph throng,

Where, blind no more, Ionia's bard is seen,
And England's heavenly minstrel sits between
The Mantuan and the wan-cheeked Florentine?

— This was the first sweet singer in the cage
Of our close-woven life. A new-born age
Claims in his vesper song its heritage:

Spare us, O, spare us long our heart's desire!
Moloch, who calls our children through the fire,
Leaves us the gentle master of the lyre.

We count not on the dial of the sun
The hours, the minutes, that his sands have run;
Rather, as on those flowers that one by one

From earliest dawn their ordered bloom display
Till evening's planet with her guiding ray
Leads in the blind old mother of the day,

We reckon by his songs, each song a flower,
The long, long daylight, numbering hour by hour,
Each breathing sweetness like a bridal bower.

His morning glory shall we e'er forget?
His noontide's full-blown lily coronet?
His evening primrose has not opened yet;

Nay, even if creeping Time should hide the skies
In midnight from his century-laden eyes,
Darkened like his who sang of Paradise,

Would not some hidden song-bud open bright
As the resplendent cactus of the night
That floods the gloom with fragrance and with light?

— How can we praise the verse whose music flows
With solemn cadence and majestic close,
Pure as the dew that filters through the rose?

How shall we thank him that in evil days
He faltered never, — nor for blame, nor praise,
Nor hire, nor party, shamed his earlier lays?

But as his boyhood was of manliest hue,
So to his youth his manly years were true,
All dyed in royal purple through and through!

He for whose touch the lyre of Heaven is strung
Needs not the flattering toil of mortal tongue:
Let not the singer grieve to die unsung!

Marbles forget their message to mankind:
In his own verse the poet still we find,
In his own page his memory lives enshrined,

As in their amber sweets the smothered bees, —
As the fair cedar, fallen before the breeze,
Lies self-embalmed amidst the mouldering trees.

— Poets, like youngest children, never grow
Out of their mother's fondness. Nature so
Holds their soft hands, and will not let them go,

Till at the last they track with even feet
Her rhythmic footsteps, and their pulses beat
Twinned with her pulses, and their lips repeat

The secrets she has told them, as their own:
Thus is the inmost soul of Nature known,
And the rapt minstrel shares her awful throne!

O lover of her mountains and her woods,
Her bridal chamber's leafy solitudes,
Where Love himself with tremulous step intrudes,

Her snows fall harmless on thy sacred fire:
Far be the day that claims thy sounding lyre
To join the music of the angel choir!

Yet, since life's amplest measure must be filled,
Since throbbing hearts must be forever stilled,
And all must fade that evening sunsets gild,

Grant, Father, ere he close the mortal eyes
That see a Nation's reeking sacrifice,
Its smoke may vanish from these blackened skies!

Then, when his summons comes, since come it must,
And, looking heavenward with unfaltering trust,
He wraps his drapery round him for the dust,

His last fond glance will show him o'er his head
The Northern fires beyond the zenith spread
In lambent glory, blue and white and red, —

The Southern cross without its bleeding load,
The milky way of peace all freshly strowed,
And every white-throned star fixed in its lost abode!

AT A DINNER TO GENERAL GRANT.

JULY 31, 1865.

WHEN treason first began the strife
That crimsoned sea and shore,
The Nation poured her hoarded life
On Freedom's threshing-floor;
From field and prairie, east and west,
From coast and hill and plain,
The sheaves of ripening manhood pressed
Thick as the bearded grain.

Rich was the harvest; souls as true
As ever battle tried;
But fiercer still the conflict grew,
The floor of death more wide;
Ah, who forgets that dreadful day
Whose blot of grief and shame
Four bitter years scarce wash away
In seas of blood and flame?

Vain, vain the Nation's lofty boasts, —
Vain all her sacrifice!
"Give me a man to lead my hosts,
O God in heaven!" she cries.
While battle whirls his crushing flail,
And plies his winnowing fan, —
Thick flies the chaff on every gale, —
She cannot find her man!

Bravely they fought who failed to win, —
Our leaders battle-scarred, —
Fighting the hosts of hell and sin,
But devils die always hard!
Blame not the broken tools of God
That helped our sorest needs;
Through paths that martyr feet have trod
The conqueror's steps he leads.

But now the heavens grow black with doubt,
The ravens fill the sky,
"Friends" plot within, foes storm without,
Hark, — that despairing cry,
"Where is the heart, the hand, the brain
To dare, to do, to plan?"
The bleeding Nation shrieks in vain, —
She has not found her man!

A little echo stirs the air, —
Some tale, whate'er it be,
Of rebels routed in their lair
Along the Tennessee.
The little echo spreads and grows,
And soon the trump of Fame
Had taught the Nation's friends and foes
The "man on horseback" 's name.

So well his warlike wooing sped,
No fortress might resist
His billets-doux of lisping lead,
The bayonets in his fist, —
With kisses from his cannons' mouth
He made his passion known
Till Vicksburg, vestal of the South,
Unbound her virgin zone.

And still where'er his banners led
He conquered as he came,
The trembling hosts of treason fled
Before his breath of flame,
And Fame's still gathering echoes grew
Till high o'er Richmond's towers
The starry fold of Freedom flew,
And all the land was ours.

Welcome from fields where valor fought
To feasts where pleasure waits;
A Nation gives you smiles unbought
At all her opening gates!
Forgive us when we press your hand, —
Your war-worn features scan, —
God sent you to a bleeding land;
Our Nation found its man!

AT A DINNER TO ADMIRAL FARRAGUT.

JULY 6, 1865.

Now smiling friends and shipmates all,
Since half our battle 's won,
A broadside for our Admiral!
— Load every crystal gun!
Stand ready till I give the word, —
— You won't have time to tire, —
And when that glorious name is heard,
Then hip! hurrah! and fire!

Bow foremost sinks the rebel craft, —
Our eyes not sadly turn
And see the pirates huddling aft
To drop their raft astern;
Soon o'er the sea-worm's destined prey
The lifted wave shall close, —
So perish from the face of day
All Freedom's banded foes!

But ah! what splendors fire the sky!
What glories greet the morn!
The storm-tost banner streams on high
Its heavenly hues new-born!
Its red fresh dyed in heroes' blood,
Its peaceful white more pure,
To float unstained o'er field and flood
While earth and seas endure!

All shapes before the driving blast
Must glide from mortal view;
Black roll the billows of the past
Behind the present's blue,
Fast, fast, are lessening in the light
The names of high renown, —
Van Tromp's proud besom fades from sight,
And Nelson 's half hull down!

Scarce one tall frigate walks the sea
Or skirts the safer shores
Of all that bore to victory
Our stout old Commodores;
Hull, Bainbridge, Porter, — where are they?
The waves their answer roll,
"Still bright in memory's sunset ray, —
God rest each gallant soul!"

A brighter name must dim their light
With more than noontide ray,
The Sea-king of the "River Fight,"
The Conqueror of the Bay, —
Now then the broadside! cheer on cheer
To greet him safe on shore!
Health, peace, and many a bloodless year
To fight his battles o'er!

A TOAST TO WILKIE COLLINS.

February 16, 1874.

The painter's and the poet's fame
Shed their twinned lustre round his name,
To gild our story-teller's art,
Where each in turn must play his part.

What scenes from Wilkie's pencil sprung,
The minstrel saw but left unsung!
What shapes the pen of Collins drew,
No painter clad in living hue!

But on our artist's shadowy screen
A stranger miracle is seen
Than priest unveils or pilgrim seeks, —
The poem breathes, the picture speaks!

And so his double name comes true,
They christened better than they knew,
And art proclaims him twice her son, —
Painter and poet, both in one!

February 16, 1874.

TO H. W. LONGFELLOW.

BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR EUROPE, MAY 27, 1868.

Our Poet, who has taught the Western breeze
To waft his songs before him o'er the seas,
Will find them wheresoe'er his wanderings reach
Borne on the spreading tide of English speech
Twin with the rhythmic waves that kiss the farthest beach.

Where shall the singing bird a stranger be
That finds a nest for him in every tree?
How shall he travel who can never go
Where his own voice the echoes do not know,
Where his own garden flowers no longer learn to grow?

Ah, gentlest soul! how gracious, how benign
Breathes through our troubled life that voice of thine,

Filled with a sweetness born of happier spheres,
That wins and warms, that kindles, softens, cheers,
That calms the wildest woe and stays the bitterest tears!

Forgive the simple words that sound like praise;
The mist before me dims my gilded phrase;
Our speech at best is half alive and cold,
And save that tenderer moments make us bold
Our whitening lips would close, their truest truth untold.

We who behold our autumn sun below
The Scorpion's sign, against the Archer's bow,
Know well what parting means of friend from friend;
After the snows no freshening dews descend,
And what the frost has marred, the sunshine will not mend.

So we all count the months, the weeks, the days,
That keep thee from us in unwonted ways,
Grudging to alien hearths our widowed time;
And one has shaped a breath in artless rhyme
That sighs, "We track thee still through each remotest clime."

What wishes, longings, blessings, prayers shall be
The more than golden freight that floats with thee!
And know, whatever welcome thou shalt find, —
Thou who hast won the hearts of half mankind, —
The proudest, fondest love thou leavest still behind!

TO CHRISTIAN GOTTFRIED EHRENBERG.

For his "Jubilæum" at Berlin, November 5, 1863.

Thou who hast taught the teachers of mankind
How from the least of things the mightiest grow,
What marvel jealous Nature made thee blind,
Lest man should learn what angels long to know!
Thou in the flinty rock, the river's flow,
In the thick-moted sunbeam's sifted light
Hast trained thy downward-pointed tube to show
Worlds within worlds unveiled to mortal sight,
Even as the patient watchers of the night, —
The cyclops gleaners of the fruitful skies, —
Show the wide misty way where heaven is white
All paved with suns that daze our wondering eyes.

Far o'er the stormy deep an empire lies,
Beyond the storied islands of the blest,
That waits to see the lingering day-star rise;

The forest-cinctured Eden of the West;
Whose queen, fair Freedom, twines her iron crest
With leaves from every wreath that mortals wear,
But loves the sober garland ever best
That Science lends the sage's silvered hair;—
Science, who makes life's heritage more fair,
Forging for every lock its mastering key,
Filling with life and hope the stagnant air,
Pouring the light of Heaven o'er land and sea!
From her unsceptred realm we come to thee,
Bearing our slender tribute in our hands;
Deem it not worthless, humble though it be,
Set by the larger gifts of older lands:
The smallest fibres weave the strongest bands,—
In narrowest tubes the sovereign nerves are spun,—
A little cord along the deep sea-sands
Makes the live thought of severed nations one:
Thy fame has journeyed westering with the sun,
Prairies and lone sierras know thy name
And the long day of service nobly done
That crowns thy darkened evening with its flame!

One with the grateful world, we own thy claim,—
Nay, rather claim our right to join the throng
Who come with varied tongues, but hearts the same,

To hail thy festal morn with smiles and song;
Ah, happy they to whom the joys belong
Of peaceful triumphs that can never die
From history's record,—not of gilded wrong,
But golden truths that while the world goes by
With all its empty pageant, blazoned high
Around the Master's name forever shine!
So shines thy name illumined in the sky,—
Such joys, such triumphs, such remembrance thine!

MEMORIAL VERSES.

FOR THE SERVICES IN MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

CITY OF BOSTON, JUNE 1, 1865.

CHORAL: Luther's "Judgment Hymn."

O THOU of soul and sense and breath,
The ever-present Giver,
Unto thy mighty Angel, Death,
All flesh thou dost deliver;
What most we cherish we resign,
For life and death alike are thine,
Who reignest Lord forever!

Our hearts lie buried in the dust
With him so true and tender,
The patriot's stay, the people's trust,
The shield of the offender;

Yet every murmuring voice is still,
As, bowing to thy sovereign will,
Our best-loved we surrender.

Dear Lord, with pitying eye behold
This martyr generation,
Which thou, through trials manifold,
Art showing thy salvation!
O let the blood by murder spilt
Wash out thy stricken children's guilt
And sanctify our nation!

Be thou thy orphaned Israel's friend,
Forsake thy people never,
In One our broken Many blend,
That none again may sever!
Hear us, O Father, while we raise
With trembling lips our song of praise,
And bless thy name forever!

FOR THE COMMEMORATION SERVICES.

CAMBRIDGE, JULY 21, 1865.

FOUR summers coined their golden light in leaves,
  Four wasteful autumns flung them to the gale,
Four winters wore the shroud the tempest weaves,
  The fourth wan April weeps o'er hill and vale;

And still the war-clouds scowl on sea and land,
  With the red gleams of battle staining through,
When lo! as parted by an angel's hand,
  They open, and the heavens again are blue!

Which is the dream, the present or the past?
  The night of anguish or the joyous morn?
The long, long years with horrors overcast,
  Or the sweet promise of the day new-born?

Tell us, O father, as thine arms infold
  Thy bolted first-born in their fast embrace,
Murmuring the prayer the patriarch breathed of old, —
  "Now let me die, for I have seen thy face!"

Tell us, O mother, — nay, thou canst not speak,
  But thy fond eyes shall answer, brimmed with joy, —
Press thy mute lips against the sun-browned cheek,
  Is this a phantom, — thy returning boy?

Tell us, O maiden — Ah, what canst thou tell
  That Nature's record is not first to teach, —
The open volume all can read so well,
  With its twin rose-hued pages full of speech?

And ye who mourn your dead, — how sternly true
  The crushing hour that wrenched their lives away,
Shadowed with sorrow's midnight veil for you,
  For them the dawning of immortal day!

Dream-like these years of conflict, not a dream!
  Death, ruin, ashes tell the awful tale,
Read by the flaming war-track's lurid gleam:
  No dream, but truth that turns the nations pale!

For on the pillar raised by martyr hands
Burns the rekindled beacon of the right,
Sowing its seeds of fire o'er all the lands, —
Thrones look a century older in its light!

Rome had her triumphs; round the conqueror's car
The ensigns waved, the brazen clarions blew,
And o'er the reeking spoils of bandit war
With outspread wings the cruel eagles flew;

Arms, treasures, captives, kings in clanking chains
Urged on by trampling cohorts bronzed and scarred,
And wild-eyed wonders snared on Lybian plains,
Lion and ostrich and camelopard.

Vain all that prætors clutched, that consuls brought
When Rome's returning legions crowned their lord;
Less than the least brave deed these hands have wrought,
We clasp, unclinching from the bloody sword.

Theirs was the mighty work that seers foretold;
They know not half their glorious toil has won,
For this is Heaven's same battle, — joined of old
When Athens fought for us at Marathon!

— Behold a vision none hath understood!
The breaking of the Apocalyptic seal;
Twice rings the summons. — Hail and fire and blood!
Then the third angel blows his trumpet-peal.

Loud wail the dwellers on the myrtled coasts,
The green savannas swell the maddened cry,
And with a yell from all the demon hosts
Falls the great star called Wormwood from the sky!

Bitter it mingles with the poisoned flow
Of the warm rivers winding to the shore,
Thousands must drink the waves of death and woe,
But the star Wormwood stains the heavens no more!

Peace smiles at last; the Nation calls her sons
To sheathe the sword; her battle-flag she furls,
Speaks in glad thunders from unshotted guns,
No terror shrouded in the smoke-wreath's curls.

O ye that fought for Freedom, living, dead,
One sacred host of God's anointed Queen,
For every holy drop your veins have shed
We breathe a welcome to our bowers of green!

Welcome, ye living! from the foeman's gripe
Your country's banner it was yours to wrest, —
Ah, many a forehead shows the banner-stripe,
And stars, once crimson, hallow many a breast.

And ye, pale heroes, who from glory's bed
Mark when your old battalions form in line,
Move in their marching ranks with noiseless tread,
And shape unheard the evening countersign,

Come with your comrades, the returning brave
Shoulder to shoulder they await you here;
These lent the life their martyr-brothers gave, —
Living and dead alike forever dear!

EDWARD EVERETT,

"OUR FIRST CITIZEN." *

Winter's cold drift lies glistening o'er his breast;
For him no spring shall bid the leaf unfold:
What Love could speak, by sudden grief oppressed,
What swiftly summoned Memory tell, is told.

Even as the bells, in one consenting chime,
Filled with their sweet vibrations all the air,
So joined all voices, in that mournful time,
His genius, wisdom, virtues, to declare.

What place is left for words of measured praise,
Till calm-eyed History, with her iron pen,
Grooves in the unchanging rock the final phrase
That shapes his image in the souls of men?

* Read at the meeting of the Massachusetts Historical Society, January 30, 1865.

Yet while the echoes still repeat his name,
  While countless tongues his full-orbed life rehearse,
Love, by his beating pulses taught, will claim
  The breath of song, the tuneful throb of verse, —

Verse that, in ever-changing ebb and flow,
  Moves, like the laboring heart, with rush and rest,
Or swings in solemn cadence, sad and slow,
  Like the tired heaving of a grief-worn breast.

— This was a mind so rounded, so complete;
  No partial gift of Nature in excess;
That, like a single stream where many meet,
  Each separate talent counted something less.

A little hillock, if it lonely stand,
  Holds o'er the fields an undisputed reign;
While the broad summit of the table-land
  Seems with its belt of clouds a level plain.

Servant of all his powers, that faithful slave,
  Unsleeping Memory, strengthening with his toils,
To every ruder task his shoulder gave,
  And loaded every day with golden spoils.

Order, the law of Heaven, was throned supreme
  O'er action, instinct, impulse, feeling, thought;
True as the dial's shadow to the beam,
  Each hour was equal to the charge it brought.

Too large his compass for the nicer skill
  That weighs the world of science grain by grain;
All realms of knowledge owned the mastering will
  That claimed the franchise of its whole domain.

Earth, air, sea, sky, the elemental fire,
  Art, history, song, — what meanings lie in each
Found in his cunning hand a stringless lyre,
  And poured their mingling music through his speech.

Thence flowed those anthems of our festal days,
  Whose ravishing division held apart
The lips of listening throngs in sweet amaze,
  Moved in all breasts the self same human heart.

Subdued his accents, as of one who tries
  To press some care, some haunting sadness down;
His smile half shadow; and to stranger eyes
  The kingly forehead wore an iron crown.

He was not armed to wrestle with the storm,
To fight for homely truth with vulgar power;
Grace looked from every feature, shaped his form, —
The rose of Academe, — the perfect flower!

Such was the stately scholar whom we knew
In those ill days of soul-enslaving calm,
Before the blast of Northern vengeance blew
Her snow-wreathed pine against the Southern palm.

Ah, God forgive us! did we hold too cheap
The heart we might have known, but would not see,
And look to find the nation's friend asleep
Through the dread hour of her Gethsemane?

That wrong is past; we gave him up to Death
With all a hero's honors round his name;
As martyrs coin their blood, he coined his breath,
And dimmed the scholar's in the patriot's fame.

So shall we blazon on the shaft we raise, —
Telling our grief, our pride, to unborn years, —
"He who had lived the mark of all men's praise
Died with the tribute of a Nation's tears."

SHAKESPEARE.

TERCENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

APRIL 23, 1864.

"WHO claims our Shakespeare from that realm unknown,
Beyond the storm-vexed islands of the deep,
Where Genoa's roving mariner was blown?
Her twofold Saint's-day let our England keep;
Shall warring aliens share her holy task?"
The Old World echoes ask.

O land of Shakespeare! ours with all thy past,
Till these last years that make the sea so wide,
Think not the jar of battle's trumpet-blast
Has dulled our aching sense to joyous pride
In every noble word thy sons bequeathed
The air our fathers breathed!

War-wasted, haggard, panting from the strife,
We turn to other days and far-off lands,
Live o'er in dreams the Poet's faded life,
Come with fresh lilies in our fevered hands
To wreathe his bust, and scatter purple flowers, —
Not his the need, but ours!

We call those poets who are first to mark
Through earth's dull mist the coming of the dawn, —
Who see in twilight's gloom the first pale spark,
While others only note that day is gone;
For him the Lord of light the curtain rent
That veils the firmament.

The greatest for its greatness is half known,
Stretching beyond our narrow quadrant-lines, —
As in that world of Nature all outgrown
Where Calaveras lifts his awful pines,
And cast from Mariposa's mountain-wall
Nevada's cataracts fall.

Yet heaven's remotest orb is partly ours,
Throbbing its radiance like a beating heart;
In the wide compass of angelic powers
The instinct of the blindworm has its part;

So in God's kingliest creature we behold
The flower our buds infold.

With no vain praise we mock the stone-carved name
Stamped once on dust that moved with pulse and breath,
As thinking to enlarge that amplest fame
Whose undimmed glories gild the night of death:
We praise not star or sun; in these we see
Thee, Father, only thee!

Thy gifts are beauty, wisdom, power, and love:
We read, we reverence on this human soul, —
Earth's clearest mirror of the light above, —
Plain as the record on thy prophet's scroll,
When o'er his page the effluent splendors poured,
Thine own, "Thus saith the Lord!"

This player was a prophet from on high,
Thine own elected. Statesman, poet, sage,
For him thy sovereign pleasure passed them by;
Sidney's fair youth, and Raleigh's ripened age,
Spenser's chaste soul, and his imperial mind
Who taught and shamed mankind.

Therefore we bid our hearts' Te Deum rise,
  Nor fear to make thy worship less divine,
And hear the shouted choral shake the skies,
  Counting all glory, power, and wisdom thine;
For thy great gift thy greator name adore,
    And praise thee evermore!

In this dread hour of Nature's utmost need,
  Thanks for these unstained drops of freshening dew!
O, while our martyrs fall, our heroes blood,
  Keep us to every sweet remembrance true,
Till from this blood-red sunset springs new-born
    Our Nation's second morn!

IN MEMORY OF JOHN AND ROBERT WARE.

READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY, MAY 25, 1864.

No mystic charm, no mortal art,
  Can bid our loved companions stay;
The bands that clasp them to our heart
Snap in death's frost and fall apart;
  Like shadows fading with the day,
    They pass away.

The young are stricken in their pride,
  The old, long tottering, faint and fall;
Master and scholar, side by side,
Through the dark portals silent glide,
  That open in life's mouldering wall
    And close on all.

Our friend's, our teacher's task was done,
  When Mercy called him from on high;

A little cloud had dimmed the sun,
The saddening hours had just begun,
And darker days were drawing nigh:
'T was time to die.

A whiter soul, a fairer mind,
A life with purer course and aim,
A gentler eye, a voice more kind,
We may not look on earth to find.
The love that lingers o'er his name
Is more than fame.

These blood-red summers ripen fast;
The sons are older than the sires;
Ere yet the tree to earth is cast,
The sapling falls before the blast;
Life's ashes keep their covered fires, —
Its flame expires.

Struck by the noiseless, viewless foe,
Whose deadlier breath than shot or shell
Has laid the best and bravest low,
His boy, all bright in morning's glow,
That high-souled youth he loved so well,
Untimely fell.

Yet still he wore his placid smile,
And, trustful in the cheering creed
That strives all sorrow to beguile,
Walked calmly on his way awhile:
Ah, breast that leans on breaking reed
Must ever bleed!

So they both left us, sire and son,
With opening leaf, with laden bough:
The youth whose race was just begun,
The wearied man whose course was run,
Its record written on his brow,
Are brothers now.

Brothers! — The music of the sound
Breathes softly through my closing strain;
The floor we tread is holy ground,
Those gentle spirits hovering round,
While our fair circle joins again
Its broken chain.

1864.

HUMBOLDT'S BIRTHDAY.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION, SEPTEMBER 14, 1869.

BONAPARTE, AUGUST 15, 1769. — HUMBOLDT, SEPTEMBER 14, 1769.

ERE yet the warning chimes of midnight sound,
  Set back the flaming index of the year,
Track the swift-shifting seasons in their round
  Through fivescore circles of the swinging sphere.

Lo, in yon islet of the midland sea
  That cleaves the storm-cloud with its snowy crest,
The embryo-heir of Empires yet to be,
  A month-old babe upon his mother's breast.

Those little hands that soon shall grow so strong
  In their rude grasp great thrones shall rock and fall,
Press her soft bosom, while a nursery song
  Holds the world's master in its slender thrall.

Look! a new crescent bends its silver bow;
  A new-lit star has fired the eastern sky;
Hark! by the river where the lindens blow
  A waiting household hears an infant's cry.

This, too, a conqueror! His the vast domain,
  Wider than widest sceptre-shadowed lands;
Earth, and the weltering kingdom of the main
  Laid their broad charters in his royal hands.

His was no taper lit in cloistered cage,
  Its glimmer borrowed from the grove or porch;
He read the record of the planet's page
  By Etna's glare and Cotopaxi's torch.

He heard the voices of the pathless woods;
  On the salt steppes he saw the starlight shine;
He scaled the mountain's windy solitudes,
  And trod the galleries of the breathless mine.

For him no fingering of the love-strung lyre,
  No problem vague, by torturing schoolmen vexed;
He fed no broken altar's dying fire,
  Nor skulked and scowled behind a Rabbi's text.

For God's new truth he claimed the kingly robe
That priestly shoulders counted all their own,
Unrolled the gospel of the storied globe
And led young Science to her empty throne.

While the round planet on its axle spins
One fruitful year shall boast its double birth,
And show the cradles of its mighty twins,
Master and Servant of the sons of earth.

Which wears the garland that shall never fade,
Sweet with fair memories that can never die?
Ask not the marbles where their bones are laid,
But bow thine ear to hear thy brothers' cry: —

"Tear up the despot's laurels by the root,
Like mandrakes, shrieking as they quit the soil!
Feed us no more upon the blood-red fruit
That sucks its crimson from the heart of Toil!

"We claim the food that fixed our mortal fate, —
Bend to our reach the long-forbidden tree!
The angel frowned at Eden's eastern gate, —
Its western portal is forever free!

"Bring the white blossoms of the waning year,
Heap with full hands the peaceful conqueror's shrine
Whose bloodless triumphs cost no sufferer's tear!
Hero of knowledge, be our tribute thine!"

September 14, 1869.

POEM

AT THE DEDICATION OF THE HALLECK MONUMENT, JULY 8, 1869.

SAY not the Poet dies!
Though in the dust he lies,
He cannot forfeit his melodious breath,
Unsphered by envious death!
Life drops the voiceless myriads from its roll;
Their fate he cannot share,
Who, in the enchanted air
Sweet with the lingering strains that Echo stole,
Has left his dearer self, the music of his soul!

We o'er his turf may raise
Our notes of feeble praise,
And carve with pious care for after eyes
The stone with "Here he lies";
He for himself has built a nobler shrine,
Whose walls of stately rhyme

Roll back the tides of time,
While o'er their gates the gleaming tablets shine
That wear his name inwrought with many a golden line!

Call not our Poet dead,
Though on his turf we tread!
Green is the wreath their brows so long have worn,—
The minstrels of the morn,
Who, while the Orient burned with new-born flame,
Caught that celestial fire
And struck a Nation's lyre!
These taught the western winds the poet's name;
Theirs the first opening buds, the maiden flowers of fame!

Count not our Poet dead!
The stars shall watch his bed,
The rose of June its fragrant life renew
His blushing mound to strew,
And all the tuneful throats of summer swell
With trills as crystal-clear
As when he wooed the ear
Of the young muse that haunts each wooded dell,
With songs of that "rough land" he loved so long and well!

He sleeps; he cannot die!
As evening's long-drawn sigh,
Lifting the rose-leaves on his peaceful mound,
Spreads all their sweets around,
So, laden with his song, the breezes blow
From where the rustling sedge
Frets our rude ocean's edge
To the smooth sea beyond the peaks of snow.
His soul the air enshrines and leaves but dust below!

HYMN

FOR THE CELEBRATION AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE OF HARVARD MEMORIAL HALL, CAMBRIDGE, OCTOBER 6, 1870.

NOT with the anguish of hearts that are breaking
Come we as mourners to weep for our dead;
Grief in our breasts has grown weary of aching,
Green is the turf where our tears we have shed.

While o'er their marbles the mosses are creeping,
Stealing each name and its legend away,
Give their proud story to Memory's keeping,
Shrined in the temple we hallow to-day.

Hushed are their battle-fields, ended their marches,
Deaf are their ears to the drum-beat of morn, —
Rise from the sod, ye fair columns and arches!
Tell their bright deeds to the ages unborn!

Emblem and legend may fade from the portal,
Keystone may crumble and pillar may fall;
They were the builders whose work is immortal,
Crowned with the dome that is over us all!

HYMN

FOR THE DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL HALL AT CAMBRIDGE, JUNE 23, 1874.

WHERE, girt around by savage foes,
Our nurturing Mother's shelter rose,
Behold, the lofty temple stands,
Reared by her children's grateful hands!

Firm are the pillars that defy
The volleyed thunders of the sky;
Sweet are the summer wreaths that twine
With bud and flower our martyrs' shrine.

The hues their tattered colors bore
Fall mingling on the sunlit floor
Till evening spreads her spangled pall,
And wraps in shade the storied hall.

Firm were their hearts in danger's hour,
Sweet was their manhood's morning flower,
Their hopes with rainbow hues were bright, —
How swiftly winged the sudden night!

O Mother! on thy marble page
Thy children read, from age to age,
The mighty word that upward leads
Through noble thought to nobler deeds.

Truth, heaven-born Truth, their fearless guide,
Thy saints have lived, thy heroes died;
Our love has reared their earthly shrine,
Their glory be forever thine!

HYMN

At the Funeral Services of Charles Sumner, April 29, 1874.

(Sung by male voices to a national air of Holland.)

Once more, ye sacred towers,
Your solemn dirges sound;
Strow, loving hands, the April flowers,
Once more to deck his mound.
A nation mourns its dead,
Its sorrowing voices one,
As Israel's monarch bowed his head
And cried, "My son! My son!"

Why mourn for him? — For him
The welcome angel came
Ere yet his eye with age was dim
Or bent his stately frame;

His weapon still was bright,
His shield was lifted high
To slay the wrong, to save the right, —
What happier hour to die?

Thou orderest all things well;
Thy servant's work was done;
He lived to hear Oppression's knell,
The shouts for Freedom won.
Hark! from the opening skies
The anthem's echoing swell, —
"O mourning Land, lift up thine eyes!
God reigneth. All is well!"

RHYMES OF AN HOUR.

ADDRESS

For the Opening of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, December 3, 1873.

Hang out our banners on the stately tower!
It dawns at last — the long-expected hour!
The steep is climbed, the star-lit summit won,
The builder's task, the artist's labor done;
Before the finished work the herald stands,
And asks the verdict of your lips and hands!

Shall rosy daybreak make us all forget
The golden sun that yester-evening set?
Fair was the fabric doomed to pass away
Ere the last headaches born of New Year's Day.
With blasting breath the fierce destroyer came
And wrapped the victim in his robes of flame;

The pictured sky with redder morning blushed,
With scorching streams the naiad's fountain gushed,
With kindling mountains glowed the funeral pyre,
Forests ablaze and rivers all on fire, —
The scenes dissolved, the shrivelling curtain fell, —
Art spread her wings and sighed a long farewell!

Mourn o'er the Player's melancholy plight, —
Falstaff in tears, Othello deadly white, —
Poor Romeo reckoning what his doublet cost,
And Juliet whimpering for her dresses lost, —
Their wardrobes burned, their salaries all undrawn,
Their cues cut short, their occupation gone!

"Lie there in dust," the red-winged demon cried,
"Wreck of the lordly city's hope and pride!"
Silent they stand, and stare with vacant gaze,
While o'er the embers leaps the fitful blaze;
When, lo! a hand, before the startled train,
Writes in the ashes, "It shall rise again, —
Rise and confront its elemental foes!" —
The word was spoken, and the walls arose,
And ere the seasons round their brief career
The new-born temple waits the unborn year.

Ours was the toil of many a weary day
Your smiles, your plaudits, only can repay;
We are the monarchs of the painted scenes,
You, you alone the real Kings and Queens!
Lords of the little kingdom where we meet,
We lay our gilded sceptres at your feet,
Place in your grasp our portal's silvered keys
With one brief utterance — *We have tried to please.*
Tell us, ye Sovereigns of the new domain,
Are you content — or have we toiled in vain?

With no irreverent glances look around
The realm you rule, for this is haunted ground!
Here stalks the Sorcerer, here the Fairy trips,
Here limps the Witch with malice-working lips,
The Graces here their snowy arms entwine,
Here dwell the fairest sisters of the Nine, —
She who, with jocund voice and twinkling eye,
Laughs at the brood of follies as they fly;
She of the dagger and the deadly bowl,
Whose charming horrors thrill the trembling soul;
She who, a truant from celestial spheres,
In mortal semblance now and then appears,
Stealing the fairest earthly shape she can —
Sontag or Nilsson, Lind or Malibran;

With these the spangled houri of the dance, —
What shaft so dangerous as her melting glance,
As poised in air she spurns the earth below,
And points aloft her heavenly-minded toe!

What were our life, with all its rents and seams,
Stripped of its purple robes, our waking dreams?
The poet's song, the bright romancer's page,
The tinselled shows that cheat us on the stage
Lead all our fancies captive at their will;
Three years or threescore, we are children still.
The little listener on his father's knee,
With wandering Sindbad ploughs the stormy sea,
With Gotham's sages hears the billows roll
(Illustrious trio of the venturous bowl,
Too early shipwrecked, for they died too soon
To see their offspring launch the great balloon);
Tracks the dark brigand to his mountain lair,
Slays the grim giant, saves the lady fair,
Fights all his country's battles o'er again
From Bunker's blazing height to Lundy's lane;
Floats with the mighty Captains as they sailed
Before whose flag the flaming red-cross paled,
And claims the oft-told story of the scars
Scarce yet grown white, that saved the stripes and stars!

Children of later growth, we love the PLAY,
We love its heroes, be they grave or gay,
From squeaking, peppery, devil-defying Punch
To roaring Richard with his camel-hunch;
Adore its heroines, those immortal dames,
Time's only rivals, whom he never tames,
Whose youth, unchanging, lives while thrones decay
(Age spares the Pyramids — and Dejazet);
The saucy-aproned, razor-tongued soubrette,
The blond-haired beauty with the eyes of jet,
The gorgeous Beings whom the viewless wires
Lift to the skies in strontian-crimsoned fires,
And all the wealth of splendor that awaits
The throng that enters those Elysian gates.

See where the hurrying crowd impatient pours,
With noise of trampling feet and flapping doors,
Streams to the numbered seat each pasteboard fits
And smooths its caudal plumage as it sits;
Waits while the slow musicians saunter in,
Till the bald leader taps his violin;
Till the old overture we know so well,
Zampa or Magic Flute or William Tell,
Has done its worst — then hark! the tinkling bell!

The crash is o'er — the crinkling curtain furled,
And lo! the glories of that brighter world!

Behold the offspring of the Thespian cart,
This full-grown temple of the magic art,
Where all the conjurors of illusion meet,
And please us all the more, the more they cheat.
These are the wizards and the witches too
Who win their honest bread by cheating you
With cheeks that drown in artificial tears
And lying skull-caps white with seventy years,
Sweet-tempered matrons changed to scolding Kates,
Maids mild as moonbeams crazed with murderous hates,
Kind, simple souls that stab and slash and slay
And stick at nothing, if it 's in the play!

Would all the world told half as harmless lies!
Would all its real fools were half as wise
As he who blinks through dull Dundreary's eyes!
Would all the unhanged bandits of the age
Were like the peaceful ruffians of the stage!
Would all the cankers wasting town and state,
The mob of rascals, little thieves and great,
Dealers in watered milk and watered stocks,

Who lead us lambs to pasture on the rocks, —
Shepherds — Jack Sheppards — of their city flocks —
The rings of rogues that rob the luckless town,
Those evil angels creeping up and down
The Jacob's ladder of the treasury stairs, —
Not stage, but real Turpins and Macaires, —
Could doff, like us, their knavery with their clothes,
And find it easy as forgetting oaths!

Welcome, thrice welcome to our virgin dome,
The Muses' shrine, the Drama's new-found home!
Here shall the Statesman rest his weary brain,
The worn-out Artist find his wits again;
Here Trade forget his ledger and his cares,
And sweet communion mingle Bulls and Bears;
Here shall the youthful Lover, nestling near
The shrinking maiden, her he holds most dear,
Gaze on the mimic moonlight as it falls
On painted groves, on sliding canvas walls,
And sigh, "My angel! What a life of bliss
We two could live in such a world as this!"
Here shall the tumid pedants of the schools,
The gilded boors, the labor-scorning fools,
The grass-green rustic and the smoke-dried cit,
Feel each in turn the stinging lash of wit,

And as it tingles on some tender part
Each find a balsam in his neighbor's smart;
So every folly prove a fresh delight
As in the pictures of our play to-night.

Farewell! The Players wait the Prompter's call;
Friends, lovers, listeners! Welcome one and all!

RIP VAN WINKLE, M. D.

AN AFTER-DINNER PRESCRIPTION

TAKEN BY THE MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY, AT THEIR MEETING HELD MAY 25, 1870.

CANTO FIRST.

OLD Rip Van Winkle had a grandson, Rip,
Of the paternal block a genuine chip;
A lazy, sleepy, curious kind of chap;
He, like his grandsire, took a mighty nap,
Whereof the story I propose to tell
In two brief cantos, if you listen well.

The times were hard when Rip to manhood grew;
They always will be when there 's work to do;
He tried at farming — found it rather slow —
And then at teaching — what he did n't know;
Then took to hanging round the tavern bars,
To frequent toddies and long-nine cigars,

Till Dame Van Winkle, out of patience, vexed
With preaching homilies, having for their text
A mop, a broomstick — aught that might avail
To point a moral or adorn a tale,
Exclaimed, "I have it! Now then, Mr. V.!
He 's good for *something* — make him an M. D.!"

The die was cast; the youngster was content;
They packed his shirts and stockings, and he went.
How hard he studied it were vain to tell;
He drowsed through Wistar, nodded over Bell,
Slept sound with Cooper, snored aloud on Good;
Heard heaps of lectures — doubtless understood —
A constant listener, for he did not fail
To carve his name on every bench and rail.

Months grew to years; at last he counted three,
And Rip Van Winkle found himself M. D.
Illustrious title! in a gilded frame
He set the sheepskin with his Latin name,
RIPUM VAN WINKLUM, QUEM WE — SCIMUS — know
IDONEUM ESSE — to do so and so;
He hired an office; soon its walls displayed
His new diploma and his stock in trade,

A mighty arsenal to subdue disease,
Of various names, whereof I mention these:
Lancets and bougies, great and little squirt,
Rhubarb and Senna, Snakeroot, Thoroughwort,
Ant. Tart., Vin. Colch., Pil. Cochiæ, and Black Drop,
Tinctures of Opium, Gentian, Henbane, Hop,
Pulv. Ipecacuanhæ, which for lack
Of breath to utter men call Ipecac,
Camphor and Kino, Turpentine, Tolu,
Cubebs, "Copeovy," Vitriol — white and blue,
Fennel and Flaxseed, Slippery Elm and Squill,
And roots of Sassafras and "Sassaf' rill,"
Brandy — for colics — Pinkroot, death on worms —
Valerian, calmer of hysteric squirms,
Musk, Assafœtida, the resinous gum
Named from its odor — well, it does smell some —
Jalap, that works not wisely, but too well,
Ten pounds of Bark and six of Calomel.

For outward griefs he had an ample store,
Some twenty jars and gallipots, or more;
Ceratum simplex — housewives oft compile
The same at home, and call it "wax and ile";
Unguentum Resinosum — change its name,
The "drawing salve" of many an ancient dame;

Argenti Nitras, also Spanish flies,
Whose virtue makes the water-bladders rise —
(Some say that spread upon a toper's skin
They draw no water, only rum or gin) —
Leeches, sweet vermin! don't they charm the sick?
And Sticking-plaster — how it hates to stick!
Emplastrum Ferri — ditto *Picis*, Pitch;
Washes and Powders, Brimstone for the —— which,
Scabies or *Psora*, is thy chosen name
Since Hahnemann's goose-quill scratched thee into fame,
Proved thee the source of every nameless ill,
Whose sole specific is a moonshine pill,
Till saucy Science, with a quiet grin,
Held up the Acarus, crawling on a pin?
— Mountains have labored and have brought forth mice:
The Dutchman's theory hatched a brood of — twice
I've wellnigh said them — words unfitting quite
For these fair precincts and for ears polite.

The surest foot may chance at last to slip,
And so at length it proved with Doctor Rip.
One full-sized bottle stood upon the shelf
Which held the medicine that he took himself;

Whate'er the reason, it must be confessed
He filled that bottle oftener than the rest;
What drug it held I don't presume to know —
The gilded label said "Elixir Pro."

One day the Doctor found the bottle full,
And, being thirsty, took a vigorous pull,
Put back the "Elixir" where 't was always found,
And had old Dobbin saddled and brought round.
— You know those old-time rhubarb-colored nags
That carried Doctors and their saddle-bags;
Sagacious beasts! they stopped at every place
Where blinds were shut — knew every patient's case —
Looked up and thought — 'the baby 's in a fit —
That won't last long — he 'll soon be through with it;
But shook their heads before the knockered door
Where some old lady told the story o'er
Whose endless stream of tribulation flows
For gastric griefs and peristaltic woes.

What jack o' lantern led him from his way,
And where it led him, it were hard to say;
Enough that wandering many a weary mile
Through paths the mountain sheep trod single file,
O'ercome by feelings such as patients know

Who dose too freely with "Elixir Pro.,"
He tumbl — dismounted, slightly in a heap,
And lay, promiscuous, lapped in balmy sleep.

Night followed night, and day succeeded day,
But snoring still the slumbering Doctor lay.
Poor Dobbin, starving, thought upon his stall,
And straggled homeward, saddle-bags and all;
The village people hunted all around,
But Rip was missing, — never could be found.
"Drownded," they guessed; — for more than half a year
The pouts and eels *did* taste uncommon queer;
Some said of apple-brandy — other some
Found a strong flavor of New England rum.

— Why can't a fellow hear the fine things said
About a fellow when a fellow's dead?
The best of doctors — so the press declared —
A public blessing while his life was spared,
True to his country, bounteous to the poor,
In all things temperate, sober, just, and pure;
The best of husbands! echoed Mrs. Van,
And set her cap to catch another man.

— So ends this Canto — if it's *quantum suff.*,
We'll just stop here and say we've had enough,

And leave poor Rip to sleep for thirty years;
I grind the organ — if you lend your ears
To hear my second Canto, after that
We'll send around the monkey with the hat.

CANTO SECOND.

So thirty years had past — but not a word
In all that time of Rip was ever heard;
The world wagged on — it never does go back —
The widow Van was now the widow Mac —
France was an Empire — Andrew J. was dead,
And Abraham L. was reigning in his stead.
Four murderous years had passed in savage strife,
Yet still the rebel held his bloody knife.
— At last one morning — who forgets the day
When the black cloud of war dissolved away?
The joyous tidings spread o'er land and sea,
Rebellion done for! Grant has captured Lee!
Up every flag-staff sprang the Stars and Stripes —
Out rushed the Extras wild with mammoth types —
Down went the laborer's hod, the school-boy's book —
"Hooraw!" he cried, — "the rebel army's took!"
Ah! what a time! the folks all mad with joy:
Each fond, pale mother thinking of her boy;

Old gray-haired fathers meeting — Have — you —
heard?
And then a choke — and not another word;
Sisters all smiling — maidens, not less dear,
In trembling poise between a smile and tear;
Poor Bridget thinking how she'll stuff the plums
In that big cake for Johnny when he comes;
Cripples afoot; rheumatics on the jump,
Old girls so loving they could hug the pump;
Guns going bang! from every fort and ship;
They banged so loud at last they wakened Rip.

I spare the picture, how a man appears
Who 's been asleep a score or two of years;
You all have seen it to perfection done
By Joe Van Wink — I mean Rip Jefferson.
Well, so it was; old Rip at last came back,
Claimed his old wife — the present widow Mac —
Had his old sign regilded, and began
To practise physic on the same old plan.

Some weeks went by — it was not long to wait —
And "please to call" grew frequent on the slate.
He had, in fact, an ancient, mildewed air,
A long gray beard, a plentcous lack of hair —

The musty look that always recommends
Your good old Doctor to his ailing friends.
— Talk of your science! after all is said
There 's nothing like a bare and shiny head;
Age lends the graces that are sure to please;
Folks want their Doctors mouldy, like their cheese.

So Rip began to look at people's tongues
And thump their briskets (called it "sound their
lungs"),
Brushed up his knowledge smartly as he could,
Read in old Cullen and in Doctor Good.
The town was healthy; for a month or two
He gave the sexton little work to do.

About the time when dog-day heats begin,
The summer's usual maladies set in;
With autumn evenings dysentery came,
And dusky typhoid lit his smouldering flame;
The blacksmith ailed — the carpenter was down,
And half the children sickened in the town.
The sexton's face grew shorter than before —
The sexton's wife a brand-new bonnet wore —
Things looked quite serious — Death had got a grip
On old and young, in spite of Doctor Rip.

And now the Squire was taken with a chill —
Wife gave "hot-drops" — at night an Indian pill;
Next morning, feverish — bedtime, getting worse,
Out of his head — began to rave and curse;
The Doctor sent for — double quick he came:
Ant. Tart. gran. duo, and repeat the same
If no et cetera. Third day — nothing new;
Percussed his thorax till 't was black and blue —
Lung-fever threatening — something of the sort —
Out with the lancet — let him blood — a quart —
Ten leeches next — then blisters to his side;
Ten grains of calomel; just then he died.

The Deacon next required the Doctor's care —
Took cold by sitting in a draught of air —
Pains in the back, but what the matter is
Not quite so clear — wife calls it "rheumatix."
Rubs back with flannel — gives him something hot —
"Ah!" says the Deacon, "that goes *nigh* the spot."
Next day a *rigor* — "Run, my little man,
And say the Deacon sends for Doctor Van."
The Doctor came — percussion as before,
Thumping and banging till his ribs were sore —
"Right side the flattest" — then more vigorous raps —
"Fever — that 's certain — pleurisy, perhaps.

A quart of blood will ease the pain, no doubt,
Ten leeches next will help to suck it out,
Then clap a blister on the painful part —
But first two grains of *Antimonium Tart.*
Last, with a dose of cleansing calomel
Unload the portal system — (that sounds well!)"

But when the self-same remedies were tried,
As all the village knew, the Squire had died;
The neighbors hinted — "this will never do,
He 's killed the Squire — he 'll kill the Deacon too."

— Now when a doctor's patients are perplexed,
A *consultation* comes in order next —
You know what that is? In a certain place
Meet certain doctors to discuss a case
And other matters, such as weather, crops,
Potatoes, pumpkins, lager-beer, and hops.
For what 's the use? — there 's little to be said,
Nine times in ten your man 's as good as dead;
At best a talk (the secret to disclose)
Where three men guess and *sometimes* one man knows.

The counsel summoned came without delay —
Young Doctor Green and shrewd old Doctor Gray —

They heard the story — "Bleed!" says Doctor Green,
"That 's downright murder! cut his throat, you mean!
Leeches! the reptiles! Why, for pity's sake,
Not try an adder or a rattlesnake?
Blisters! Why bless you, they 're against the law —
It 's rank assault and battery if they draw!
Tartrate of Antimony! shade of Luke,
Stomachs turn pale at thought of such rebuke!
The portal system! What 's the man about?
Unload your nonsense! Calomel 's played out!
You 've been asleep — you 'd better sleep away
Till some one calls you"
"Stop!" says Doctor Gray —
"The story is you slept for thirty years;
With brother Green, I own that it appears
You must have slumbered most amazing sound;
But sleep once more till thirty years come round,
You 'll find the lancet in its honored place,
Leeches and blisters rescued from disgrace,
Your drugs redeemed from fashion's passing scorn,
And counted safe to give to babes unborn."

Poor sleepy Rip, M. M. S. S., M. D.,
A puzzled, serious, saddened man was he;
Home from the Deacon's house he plodded slow

And filled one bumper of "Elixir Pro."
"Good by," he faltered, "Mrs. Van, my dear!
I 'm going to sleep, but wake me once a year;
I don't like bleaching in the frost and dew,
I 'll take the barn, if all the same to you.
Just once a year — remember! no mistake!
Cry, 'Rip Van Winkle! time for you to wake!'
Watch for the week in May when laylocks blow,
For then the Doctors meet, and I must go."

Just once a year the Doctor's worthy dame
Goes to the barn and shouts her husband's name,
"Come, Rip Van Winkle!" (giving him a shake)
"Rip! Rip Van Winkle! time for you to wake!
Laylocks in blossom! 't is the month of May —
The Doctors' meeting is this blessed day,
And come what will, you know I heard you swear
You 'd never miss it, but be always there!"

And so it is, as every year comes round
Old Rip Van Winkle here is always found.
You 'll quickly know him by his mildewed air,
The hayseed sprinkled through his scanty hair,
The lichens growing on his rusty suit —
I 've seen a toadstool sprouting on his boot —

— Who says I lie? Does any man presume? —
Toadstool? No matter — call it a mushroom.
Where is his seat? He moves it every year;
But look, you 'll find him — he is always here —
Perhaps you 'll track him by a whiff you know —
A certain flavor of "Elixir Pro."

Now, then, I give you — as you seem to think
We can give toasts without a drop to drink —
Health to the mighty sleeper — long live he!
Our brother Rip, M. M. S. S., M. D.!

CHANSON WITHOUT MUSIC.

By the Professor Emeritus of Dead and Live Languages.

(Ø. B. K. — Cambridge, 1867.)

You bid me sing, — can I forget
The classic ode of days gone by, —
How bello Fifine and jeune Lisette
Exclaimed, "Anacreōn, gerōn ei"?
"Regardez donc," those ladies said, —
"You 're getting bald and wrinkled too:
When summer's roses all are shed,
Love 's nullum ite, voyez-vous!"

In vain ce brave Anacreon's cry,
"Of Love alone my banjo sings".
(Erōta mounon). "Etiam si, —
Eh b'en?" replied the saucy things, —
"Go find a maid whose hair is gray,
And strike your lyre, — we sha' n't complain;

But parce nobis, s'il vous plait, —
Voilà Adolphe! Voilà Eugène!"

Ah, jeune Lisette! Ah, belle Fifine!
Anacreon's lesson all must learn;
'O kairos oxūs; Spring is green,
But Acer Hyems waits his turn!
I hear you whispering from the dust,
"Tiens, mon cher, c'est toujours so, —
The brightest blade grows dim with rust,
The fairest meadow white with snow!"

You do not mean it! *Not* encore?
Another string of playday rhymes?
You 've heard me — nonne est? — before,
Multoties, — more than twenty times;
Non possum, — vraiment, — pas du tout,
I cannot! I am loath to shirk;
But who will listen if I do,
My memory makes such shocking work?

Ginōsko. Scio. Yes, I 'm told
Some ancients like my rusty lay,
As Grandpa Noah loved the old
Red-sandstone march of Jubal's day.

I used to carol like the birds,
But time my wits has quite unfixed,
Et quoad verba, — for my words, —
Ciel! Eheu! Whe-ew! — how they 're mixed!

Mehercle! Zeu! Diable! how
My thoughts were dressed when I was young,
But tempus fugit! see them now
Half clad in rags of every tongue!
O philoi, fratres, chers amis!
I dare not court the youthful Muse,
For fear her sharp response should be,
"Papa Anacreon, please excuse!"

Adieu! I 've trod my annual track
How long! — let others count the miles, —
And peddled out my rhyming pack
To friends who always paid in smiles.
So, laissez-moi! some youthful wit
No doubt has wares he wants to show;
And I am asking, "Let me sit,"
Dum ille clamat, "Dos pou sto!"

FOR THE CENTENNIAL DINNER

OF THE PROPRIETORS OF BOSTON PIER, OR THE LONG WHARF, APRIL 16, 1873.

Dear friends, we are strangers; we never before
Have suspected what love to each other we bore;
But each of us all to his neighbor is dear,
Whose heart has a throb for our time-honored pier.

As I look on each brother proprietor's face,
I could open my arms in a loving embrace;
What wonder that feelings, undreamed of so long,
Should burst all at once in a blossom of song!

While I turn my fond glance on the monarch of piers,
Whose throne has stood firm through his eight-score of years,
My thought travels backward, and reaches the day
When they drove the first pile on the edge of the bay.

See! The joiner, the shipwright, the smith from his forge,
The redcoat, who shoulders his gun for King George,
The shopman, the 'prentice, the boys from the lane,
The parson, the doctor with gold-headed cane,

Come trooping down King Street, where now may be seen
The pulleys and ropes of a mighty machine;
The weight rises slowly; it drops with a thud;
And, lo! the great timber sinks deep in the mud!

They are gone, the stout craftsmen that hammered the piles,
And the square-toed old boys in the three-cornered tiles;
The breeches, the buckles, have faded from view,
And the parson's white wig and the ribbon-tied queue.

The redcoats have vanished; the last grenadier
Stepped into the boat from the end of our pier;
They found that our hills were not easy to climb,
And the order came, "Countermarch, double-quick time!"

They are gone, friend and foe, — anchored fast at the pier,
Whence no vessel brings back its pale passengers here;
But our wharf, like a lily, still floats on the flood,
Its breast in the sunshine, its roots in the mud.

Who — who that has loved it so long and so well —
The flower of his birthright would barter or sell?
No: pride of the bay, while its ripples shall run,
You shall pass, as an heirloom, from father to son!

Let me part with the acres my grandfather bought,
With the bonds that my uncle's kind legacy brought,
With my bank-shares, — old "Union," whose ten per cent stock
Stands stiff through the storms as the Eddystone rock;

With my rights (or my wrongs) in the "Erie," — alas!
With my claims on the mournful and "Mutual Mass.";
With my "Phil. Wil. and Balt.," with my "C. B. and Q.";
But I never, no never, will sell out of you.

We drink to thy past and thy future to-day,
Strong right arm of Boston, stretched out o'er the bay.
May the winds waft the wealth of all nations to thee,
And thy dividends flow like the waves of the sea!

1873.

A POEM SERVED TO ORDER.

PHI BETA KAPPA, JUNE 26, 1873.

THE Caliph ordered up his cook,
And, scowling with a fearful look
That meant, — We stand no gammon, —
"To-morrow, just at two," he said,
"Hassan, our cook, will lose his head,
Or serve us up a salmon."

"Great Sire," the trembling *chef* replied,
"Lord of the Earth and all beside,
Sun, Moon, and Stars, and so on —"
(Look in Eothen — there you 'll find
A list of titles. Never mind,
I have n't time to go on :)

"Great Sire," and so forth, thus he spoke,
"Your Highness must intend a joke;

It does n't stand to reason
For one to order salmon brought,
Unless that fish is sometimes caught,
And also is in season.

"Our luck of late is shocking bad,
In fact, the latest catch we had
(We kept the matter shady),
But, hauling in our nets, — alack!
We found no salmon, but a sack
That held your honored Lady!"

— "Allah is great!" the Caliph said,
"My poor Zuleika, you are dead,
I once took interest in you."
— "Perhaps, my Lord, you 'd like to know
We cut the lines and let her go."
— "Allah be praised! Continue."

— "It is n't hard one's hook to bait,
And, squatting down, to watch and wait
To see the cork go under;
At last suppose you 've got your bite,
You twitch away with all your might, —
You 've hooked an eel, by thunder!"

The Caliph patted Hassan's head :
"Slave, thou hast spoken well," he said,
"And won thy master's favor.
Yes ; since what happened t' other morn
The salmon of the Golden Horn
Might have a doubtful flavor.

"That last remark about the eel
Has also justice that we feel
Quite to our satisfaction.
To-morrow we dispense with fish,
And, for the present, if you wish,
You 'll keep your bulbous fraction."

"Thanks ! thanks !" the grateful *chef* replied,
His nutrient feature showing wide
The gleam of arches dental :
"To cut my head off would n't pay,
I find it useful every day,
As well as ornamental."

Brothers, I hope you will not fail
To see the moral of my tale
And kindly to receive it.

You know your anniversary pie
Must have its crust, though hard and dry,
And some prefer to leave it.

How oft before these youths were born
I 've fished in Fancy's Golden Horn
For what the Muse might send me !
How gayly then I cast the line,
When all the morning sky was mine,
And Hope her flies would lend me !

And now I hear our despot's call,
And come, like Hassan, to the hall, —
If there 's a slave, I am one, —
My bait no longer flies, but worms !
I 've caught — Lord bless me ! how he squirms !
An eel, and not a salmon !

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH.

READ AT THE MEETING OF THE HARVARD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, JUNE 25, 1873.

THE fount the Spaniard sought in vain
  Through all the land of flowers
Leaps glittering from the sandy plain
  Our classic grove embowers;
Here youth, unchanging, blooms and smiles,
  Here dwells eternal spring,
And warm from Hope's elysian isles
  The winds their perfume bring.

Here every leaf is in the bud,
  Each singing throat in tune,
And bright o'er evening's silver flood
  Shines the young crescent moon.
What wonder Age forgets his staff
  And lays his glasses down,

And gray-haired grandsires look and laugh
  As when their locks were brown!

With ears grown dull and eyes grown dim
  They greet the joyous day
That calls them to the fountain's brim
  To wash their years away.
What change has clothed the ancient sire
  In sudden youth? For, lo!
The Judge, the Doctor, and the Squire
  Are Jack and Bill and Joe!

And be his titles what they will,
  In spite of manhood's claim
The graybeard is a school-boy still
  And loves his school-boy name;
It calms the ruler's stormy breast
  Whom hurrying care pursues,
And brings a sense of peace and rest,
  Like slippers after shoes.

And what are all the prizes won
  To youth's enchanted view?
And what is all the man has done
  To what the boy may do?

O blessed fount, whose waters flow
  Alike for sire and son,
That melts our winter's frost and snow
  And makes all ages one!

I pledge the sparkling fountain's tide,
  That flings its golden shower
With age to fill and youth to guide,
  Still fresh in morning flower!
Flow on with ever-widening stream,
  In ever-brightening morn, —
Our story's pride, our future's dream,
  The hope of times unborn!

A HYMN OF PEACE.

SUNG AT THE "JUBILEE," JUNE 15, 1869, TO THE MUSIC OF KELLER'S "AMERICAN HYMN."

ANGEL of Peace, thou hast wandered too long!
  Spread thy white wings to the sunshine of love!
Come while our voices are blended in song, —
  Fly to our ark like the storm-beaten dove!
Fly to our ark on the wings of the dove, —
  Speed o'er the far-sounding billows of song,
Crowned with thine olive-leaf garland of love, —
  Angel of Peace, thou hast waited too long!

Brothers we meet, on this altar of thine
  Mingling the gifts we have gathered for thee,
Sweet with the odors of myrtle and pine,
  Breeze of the prairie and breath of the sea, —
Meadow and mountain and forest and sea!
  Sweet is the fragrance of myrtle and pine,

Sweeter the incense we offer to thee,
Brothers once more round this altar of thine!

Angels of Bethlehem, answer the strain!
Hark! a new birth-song is filling the sky! —
Loud as the storm-wind that tumbles the main
Bid the full breath of the organ reply, —
Let the loud tempest of voices reply, —
Roll its long surge like the earth-shaking main!
Swell the vast song till it mounts to the sky! —
Angels of Bethlehem, echo the strain!

POEMS

FOR THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE CLASS OF 1829, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

1864.

OUR CLASSMATE, F. W. C.

Fast as the rolling seasons bring
The hour of fate to those we love,
Each pearl that leaves the broken string
Is set in Friendship's crown above.
As narrower grows the earthly chain,
The circle widens in the sky;
These are our treasures that remain,
But those are stars that beam on high.

We miss — O, how we miss! — *his* face, —
With trembling accents speak his name.
Earth cannot fill his shadowed place
From all her rolls of pride and fame;

Our song has lost the silvery thread
That carolled through his jocund lips;
Our laugh is mute, our smile is fled,
And all our sunshine in eclipse.

And what and whence the wondrous charm
That kept his manhood boy-like still, —
That life's hard censors could disarm
And lead them captive at his will?
His heart was shaped of rosier clay, —
His veins were filled with ruddier fire, —
Time could not chill him, fortune sway,
Nor toil with all its burdens tire.

His speech burst throbbing from its fount
And set our colder thoughts aglow,
As the hot leaping geysers mount
And falling melt the Iceland snow.
Some word, perchance, we counted rash, —
Some phrase our calmness might disclaim,
Yet 't was the sunset lightning's flash,
No angry bolt, but harmless flame.

Man judges all, God knoweth each;
We read the rule, He sees the law;

How oft his laughing children teach
The truths his prophets never saw!
O friend, whose wisdom flowered in mirth,
Our hearts are sad, our eyes are dim;
He gave thy smiles to brighten earth, —
We trust thy joyous soul to Him!

Alas! — our weakness Heaven forgive!
We murmur, even while we trust,
"How long earth's breathing burdens live,
Whose hearts, before they die, are dust!"
But thou! — through grief's untimely tears
We ask with half-reproachful sigh —
"Couldst thou not watch a few brief years
Till Friendship faltered, 'Thou mayst die?'"

Who loved our boyish years so well?
Who knew so well their pleasant tales,
And all those livelier freaks could tell
Whose oft-told story never fails?
In vain we turn our aching eyes, —
In vain we stretch our eager hands, —
Cold in his wintry shroud he lies
Beneath the dreary drifting sands!

Ah, speak not thus! *He* lies not there!
We see him, hear him as of old!
He comes! he claims his wonted chair;
His beaming face we still behold!
His voice rings clear in all our songs,
And loud his mirthful accents rise;
To us our brother's life belongs, —
Dear friends, a classmate never dies!

1865.

OUR OLDEST FRIEND.

I GIVE you the health of the oldest friend
That, short of eternity, earth can lend, —
A friend so faithful and tried and true
That nothing can wean him from me and you.

When first we screeched in the sudden blaze
Of the daylight's blinding and blasting rays,
And gulped at the gaseous, groggy air,
This old, old friend stood waiting there.

And when, with a kind of mortal strife,
We had gasped and choked into breathing life,
He watched by the cradle, day and night,
And held our hands till we stood upright.

From gristle and pulp our frames have grown
To stringy muscle and solid bone;
While we were changing, he altered not;
We might forget, but he never forgot.

He came with us to the college class, —
Little cared he for the steward's pass!
All the rest must pay their fee,
But the grim old dead-head entered free.

He stayed with us while we counted o'er
Four times each of the seasons four;
And with every season, from year to year,
The dear name Classmate he made more dear.

He never leaves us, — he never will,
Till our hands are cold and our hearts are still;
On birthdays, and Christmas, and New-Year's too,
He always remembers both me and you.

Every year this faithful friend
His little present is sure to send;
Every year, whereso'er we be,
He wants a keepsake from you and me.

How he loves us! he pats our heads,
And, lo! they are gleaming with silver threads;
And he 's always begging one lock of hair,
Till our shining crowns have nothing to wear.

At length he will tell us, one by one,
"My child, your labor on earth is done;
And now you must journey afar to see
My elder brother, — Eternity!"

And so, when long, long years have passed,
Some dear old fellow will be the last, —
Never a boy alive but he
Of all our goodly company!

When he lies down, but not till then,
Our kind Class-Angel will drop the pen
That writes in the day-book kept above
Our lifelong record of faith and love.

So here 's a health in homely rhyme
To our oldest classmate, Father Time!
May our last survivor live to be
As bald, and as wise, and as tough as he!

1866.

MY ANNUAL.

How long will this harp which you once loved to hear
Cheat your lips of a smile or your eyes of a tear?
How long stir the echoes it wakened of old,
While its strings were unbroken, untarnished its gold?

Dear friends of my boyhood, my words do you wrong;
The heart, the heart only, shall throb in my song;
It reads the kind answer that looks from your eyes, —
"We will bid our old harper play on till he dies."

Though Youth, the fair angel that looked o'er the strings,
Has lost the bright glory that gleamed on his wings,
Though the freshness of morning has passed from its tone,
It is still the old harp that was always your own.

I claim not its music, — each note it affords
I strike from your heart-strings, that lend me its chords;
I know you will listen and love to the last,
For it trembles and thrills with the voice of your past.

Ah, brothers! dear brothers! the harp that I hold
No craftsman could string and no artisan mould;
He shaped it, He strung it, who fashioned the lyres
That ring with the hymns of the seraphim choirs.

Not mine are the visions of beauty it brings,
Not mine the faint fragrance around it that clings;
Those shapes are the phantoms of years that are fled,
Those sweets breathe from roses your summers have shed.

Each hour of the past lends its tribute to this,
Till it blooms like a bower in the Garden of Bliss;
The thorn and the thistle may grow as they will,
Where Friendship unfolds there is Paradise still.

The bird wanders careless while summer is green,
The leaf-hidden cradle that rocked him unseen;
When Autumn's rude fingers the woods have undressed,
The boughs may look bare, but they show him his nest.

Too precious these moments! the lustre they fling
Is the light of our year, is the gem of its ring,
So brimming with sunshine, we almost forget
The rays it has lost, and its border of jet.

While round us the many-hued halo is shed,
How dear are the living, how near are the dead!
One circle, scarce broken, these waiting below,
Those walking the shores where the asphodels blow!

Not life shall enlarge it nor death shall divide, —
No brother new-born finds his place at my side;
No titles shall freeze us, no grandeurs infest,
His Honor, His Worship, are boys like the rest.

Some won the world's homage, their names we hold dear, —
But Friendship, not Fame, is the countersign here;
Make room by the conqueror crowned in the strife
For the comrade that limps from the battle of life!

What tongue talks of battle? Too long we have heard
In sorrow, in anguish, that terrible word;
It reddened the sunshine, it crimsoned the wave,
It sprinkled our doors with the blood of our brave.

Peace, Peace comes at last, with her garland of white;
Peace broods in all hearts as we gather to-night;
The blason of Union spreads full in the sun;
We echo its words, — We are one! We are one!

1867.

ALL HERE.

It is not what we say or sing,
  That keeps our charm so long unbroken,
Though every lightest leaf we bring
  May touch the heart as friendship's token;
Not what we sing or what we say
  Can make us dearer to each other;
We love the singer and his lay,
  But love as well the silent brother.

Yet bring whate'er your garden grows,
  Thrice welcome to our smiles and praises;
Thanks for the myrtle and the rose,
  Thanks for the marigolds and daisies;
One flower erelong we all shall claim,
  Alas! unloved of Amaryllis —

Nature's last blossom — need I name
  The wreath of threescore's silver lilies?

How many, brothers, meet to-night
  Around our boyhood's covered embers?
Go read the treasured names aright
  The old triennial list remembers:
Though twenty wear the starry sign
  That tells a life has broke its tether,
The fifty-eight of 'twenty-nine —
  God bless THE BOYS! — are all together!

These come with joyous look and word,
  With friendly grasp and cheerful greeting, —
Those smile unseen, and move unheard,
  The angel guests of every meeting;
They cast no shadow in the flame
  That flushes from the gilded lustre,
But count us — we are still the same;
  One earthly band, one heavenly cluster!

Love dies not when he bows his head
  To pass beyond the narrow portals, —
The light these glowing moments shed
  Wakes from their sleep our lost immortals;

They come as in their joyous prime,
  Before their morning days were numbered, —
Death stays the envious hand of Time, —
  The eyes have not grown dim that slumbered!

The paths that loving souls have trod
  Arch o'er the dust where worldlings grovel
High as the zenith o'er the sod, —
  The cross above the Sexton's shovel!
We rise beyond the realms of day;
  They seem to stoop from spheres of glory
With us one happy hour to stray,
  While youth comes back in song and story.

Ah! ours is friendship true as steel
  That war has tried in edge and temper;
It writes upon its sacred seal
  The priest's *ubique — omnes — semper!*
It lends the sky a fairer sun
  That cheers our lives with rays as steady
As if our footsteps had begun
  To print the golden streets already!

The tangling years have clinched its knot
  Too fast for mortal strength to sunder;

The lightning bolts of noon are shot;
  No fear of evening's idle thunder!
Too late! too late! — no graceless hand
  Shall stretch its cords in vain endeavor
To rive the close encircling band
  That made and keeps us one forever!

So when upon the fated scroll
  The falling stars have all descended,
And, blotted from the breathing roll,
  Our little page of life is ended,
We ask but one memorial line
  Traced on thy tablet, Gracious Mother:
"My children. Boys of '29.
  In pace. How they loved each other!"

1868.

ONCE MORE.

"Will I come?" That *is* pleasant! I beg to inquire
If the gun that I carry has ever missed fire?
And which was the muster-roll — mention but one —
That missed your old comrade who carries the gun?

You see me as always, my hand on the lock,
The cap on the nipple, the hammer full cock.
It is rusty, some tell me; I heed not the scoff;
It is battered and bruised, but it always goes off!

—"Is it loaded?" I'll bet you! What does n't it hold?
Rammed full to the muzzle with memories untold;
Why, it scares me to fire, lest the pieces should fly
Like the cannons that burst on the Fourth of July!

One charge is a remnant of College-day dreams
(Its wadding is made of forensics and themes);
Ah, visions of fame! what a flash in the pan
As the trigger was pulled by each clever young man!

And love! Bless my stars, what a cartridge is there!
With a wadding of rose-leaves and ribbons and hair, —
All crammed in one verse to go off at a shot!
— Were there ever such sweethearts? Of course there were not!

And next, — what a load! it will split the old gun, —
Three fingers, — four fingers, — five fingers of fun!
Come tell me, gray sages, for mischief and noise
Was there ever a lot like us fellows, "The Boys"?

Bump! bump! down the staircase the cannon-ball goes, —
Aha, old Professor! Look out for your toes!
Don't think, my poor Tutor, to *sleep* in your bed, —
Two "Boys" — 'twenty-niners — room over your head!

Remember the nights when the tar-barrel blazed!
From red "Massachusetts" the war-cry was raised;
And "Hollis" and "Stoughton" re-echoed the call;
Till P—— poked his head out of Holworthy Hall!

Old P——, as we called him, — at fifty or so, —
Not exactly a bud, but not quite in full blow;
In ripening manhood, suppose we should say,
Just nearing his prime, as we boys are to-day!

O, say, can you look through the vista of age
To the time when old Morse drove the regular stage?
When Lyon told tales of the long-vanished years,
And Lenox crept round with the rings in his ears?

And dost thou, my brother, remember indeed
The days of our dealings with Willard and Read?
When "Dolly" was kicking and running away,
And punch came up smoking on Fillebrown's tray?

But where are the Tutors, my brother, O tell! —
And where the Professors, remembered so well?
The sturdy old Grecian of Holworthy Hall,
And Latin, and Logic, and Hebrew, and all?

— "They are dead, the old fellows" (we called them so then,
Though we since have found out they were lusty young men).

— They are *dead*, do you tell me? — but how do you know?
You 've filled once too often. I doubt if it 's so.

I 'm thinking. I 'm thinking. Is this 'sixty-eight?
It 's not quite so clear. It admits of debate.
I *may* have been dreaming. I rather incline
To think — yes, I 'm certain — it is 'twenty-nine!

"By Zhorzhe!" — as friend Sales is accustomed to cry, —
You tell me they 're dead, but I know it 's a lie!
Is Jackson not President? — What was 't you said?
It can't be; you 're joking; what, — all of 'em dead?

Jim, — Harry, — Fred, — Isaac, — all gone from our side?
They could n't have left us, — no, not if they tried.
— Look, — there 's our old Praxes, — he can't find his text;
— See, — P—— rubs his leg, as he growls out, "*The next!*"

I told you 't was nonsense. Joe, give us a song!
Go harness up "Dolly," and fetch her along! —

Dead! Dead! You false graybeard, I swear they are not!
Hurrah for Old Hickory! — O, I forgot!

Well, *one* we have with us (how could he contrive
To deal with us youngsters and still to survive?)
Who wore for our guidance authority's robe, —
No wonder he took to the study of Job!

— And now as my load was uncommonly large,
Let me taper it off with a classical charge;
When that has gone off, I shall drop my old gun —
And then stand at ease, for my service is done.

Bibamus ad Classem vocatam "The Boys"
Et eorum Tutorem cui nomen est "Noyes";
Et floreant, valeant, vigeant tam,
Non Peircius ipse enumeret quam!

1869.

THE OLD CRUISER.

Here's the old cruiser, 'Twenty-nine,
Forty times she 's crossed the line;
Same old masts and sails and crew,
Tight and tough and as good as new.

Into the harbor she bravely steers
Just as she 's done for these forty years, —
Over her anchor goes, splash and clang!
Down her sails drop, rattle and bang!

Comes a vessel out of the dock
Fresh and spry as a fighting-cock,
Feathered with sails and spurred with steam,
Heading out of the classic stream.

Crew of a hundred all aboard,
Every man as fine as a lord.
Gay they look and proud they feel,
Bowling along on even keel.

On they float with wind and tide, —
Gain at last the old ship's side;
Every man looks down in turn, —
Reads the name that 's on her stern.

"'Twenty-nine! — *Diable* you say!
That was in Skipper Kirkland's day!
What was the Flying Dutchman's name?
This old rover must be the same.

"Ho! you Boatswain that walks the deck,
How does it happen you 're not a wreck?
One and another have come to grief,
How have you dodged by rock and reef?"

— Boatswain, lifting one knowing lid,
Hitches his breeches and shifts his quid:
"Hey? What is it? Who 's come to grief?
Louder, young swab, I 'm a little deaf."

"I say, old fellow, what keeps your boat
With all your jolly old boys afloat,
When scores of vessels as good as she
Have swallowed the salt of the bitter sea?

"Many a crew from many a craft
Goes drifting by on a broken raft
Pieced from a vessel that clove the brine
Taller and prouder than 'Twenty-nine.

"Some capsized in an angry breeze,
Some were lost in the narrow seas,
Some on snags and some on sands
Struck and perished and lost their hands.

"Tell us young ones, you gray old man,
What is your secret, if you can.
We have a ship as good as you,
Show us how to keep our crew."

So in his ear the youngster cries;
Then the gray Boatswain straight replies: —
"All your crew be sure you know, —
Never let one of your shipmates go.

"If he leaves you, change your tack,
Follow him close and fetch him back;
When you 've hauled him in at last,
Grapple his flipper and hold him fast.

"If you 've wronged him, speak him fair,
Say you 're sorry and make it square;
If he 's wronged you, wink so tight
None of you see what 's plain in sight.

"When the world goes hard and wrong,
Lend a hand to help him along;
When his stockings have holes to darn,
Don't you grudge him your ball of yarn.

"Once in a twelvemonth, come what may,
Anchor your ship in a quiet bay,
Call all hands and read the log,
And give 'em a taste of grub and grog.

"Stick to each other through thick and thin;
All the closer as age leaks in;
Squalls will blow and clouds will frown,
But stay by your ship till you all go down!"

Added for the Alumni Meeting, June 29, 1869.

So the gray Boatswain of 'Twenty-nine
Piped to "The Boys" as they crossed the line;
Round the cabin sat thirty guests,
Babes of the nurse with a thousand breasts.

There were the judges, grave and grand,
Flanked by the priests on either hand;
There was the lord of wealth untold,
And the dear good fellow in broadcloth old.

Thirty men, from twenty towns,
Sires and grandsires with silvered crowns, —
Thirty school-boys all in a row, —
Bens and Georges and Bill and Joe.

In thirty goblets the wine was poured,
But threescore gathered around the board, —
For lo! at the side of every chair
A shadow hovered — we all were there!

1869.

HYMN FOR THE CLASS-MEETING.

THOU Gracious Power, whose mercy lends
The light of home, the smile of friends,
Our gathered flock thine arms infold
As in the peaceful days of old.

Wilt thou not hear us while we raise,
In sweet accord of solemn praise,
The voices that have mingled long
In joyous flow of mirth and song?

For all the blessings life has brought,
For all its sorrowing hours have taught,
For all we mourn, for all we keep,
The hands we clasp, the loved that sleep;

The noontide sunshine of the past,
These brief, bright moments fading fast,
The stars that gild our darkening years,
The twilight ray from holier spheres;

We thank thee, Father! let thy grace
Our narrowing circle still embrace,
Thy mercy shed its heavenly store,
Thy peace be with us evermore!

1870.

EVEN-SONG.

It may be, yes, it must be, Time that brings
An end to mortal things,
That sends the beggar Winter in the train
Of Autumn's burdened wain, —
Time, that is heir of all our earthly state,
And knoweth well to wait
Till sea hath turned to shore and shore to sea,
If so it need must be,
Ere he make good his claim and call his own
Old empires overthrown, —
Time, who can find no heavenly orb too large
To hold its foe in charge,
Nor any motes that fill its beam so small,
But he shall care for all, —
It may be, must be, — yes, he soon shall tire
This hand that holds the lyre.

Then ye who listened in that earlier day
When to my careless lay
I matched its chords and stole their first-born thrill,
With untaught rudest skill
Vexing a treble from the slender strings
Thin as the locust sings
When the shrill-crying child of summer's heat
Pipes from its leafy seat,
The dim pavilion of embowering green
Beneath whose shadowy screen
The small sopranist tries his single note
Against the song-bird's throat,
And all the echoes listen, but in vain;
They hear no answering strain, —
Then ye who listened in that earlier day
Shall sadly turn away,

Saying, "The fire burns low, the hearth is cold
That warmed our blood of old;
Cover its embers and its half-burnt brands,
And let us stretch our hands
Over a brighter and fresh-kindled flame;
Lo, this is not the same,
The joyous singer of our morning time,
Flushed high with lusty rhyme!

Speak kindly, for he bears a human heart,
But whisper him apart, —
Tell him the woods their autumn robes have shed
And all their birds have fled,
And shouting winds unbuild the naked nests
They warmed with patient breasts;
Tell him the sky is dark, the summer o'er,
And bid him sing no more!

Ah, welladay! if words so cruel-kind
A listening ear might find!
But who that hears the music in his soul
Of rhythmic waves that roll
Crested with gleams of fire, and as they flow
Stir all the deeps below
Till the great pearls no calm might ever reach
Leap glistening on the beach, —
Who that has known the passion and the pain,
The rush through heart and brain,
The joy so like a pang his hand is pressed
Hard on his throbbing breast,
When thou, whose smile is life and bliss and fame
Hast set his pulse aflame,
Muse of the lyre! can say farewell to thee?
Alas! and must it be?

In many a clime, in many a stately tongue,
The mighty bards have sung;
To these the immemorial thrones belong
And purple robes of song;
Yet the slight minstrel loves the slender tone
His lips may call his own,
And finds the measure of the verse more sweet
Timed by his pulse's beat,
Than all the hymnings of the laurelled throng.
Say not I do him wrong,
For Nature spoils her warblers, — them she feeds
In lotus-growing meads
And pours them subtle draughts from haunted streams
That fill their souls with dreams.

Full well I know the gracious mother's wiles
And dear delusive smiles!
No callow fledgling of her singing brood
But tastes that witching food,
And hearing overhead the eagle's wing,
And how the thrushes sing,
Vents his exiguous chirp, and from his nest
Flaps forth — we know the rest.
I own the weakness of the tuneful kind, —
Are not all harpers blind?

I sang too early, must I sing too late?
The lengthening shadows wait
The first pale stars of twilight, — yet how sweet
The flattering whisper's cheat, —
"Thou hast the fire no evening chill can tame,
Whose coals outlast its flame!"

Farewell, ye carols of the laughing morn,
Of earliest sunshine born!
The sower flings the seed and looks not back
Along its furrowed track;
The reaper leaves the stalks for other hands
To gird with circling bands;
The wind, earth's careless servant, truant-born,
Blows clean the beaten corn
And quits the thresher's floor, and goes his way
To sport with ocean's spray;
The headlong-stumbling rivulet scrambling down
To wash the sea-girt town,
Still babbling of the green and billowy waste
Whose salt he longs to taste,
Ere his warm wave its chilling clasp may feel
Has twirled the miller's wheel.

The song has done its task that makes us bold
With secrets else untold, —

And mine has run its errand; through the dews
I tracked the flying Muse;
The daughter of the morning touched my lips
With roseate finger-tips;
Whether I would or would not, I must sing
With the new choirs of spring;
Now, as I watch the fading autumn day
And trill my softened lay,
I think of all that listened, and of one
For whom a brighter sun
Dawned at high summer's noon. Ah, comrades dear,
Are not all gathered here?
Our hearts have answered. — Yes! they hear our call:
All gathered here! all! all!

1872.

THE SMILING LISTENER.

PRECISELY. I see it. You all want to say
That a tear is too sad and a laugh is too gay;
You could stand a faint smile, you could manage a sigh,
But you value your ribs, and you don't want to cry.

And why at our feast of the clasping of hands
Need we turn on the stream of our lachrymal glands?
Though we see the white breakers of age on our bow,
Let us take a good pull in the jolly-boat now!

It 's hard if a fellow cannot feel content
When a banquet like this does n't cost him a cent,
When his goblet and plate he may empty at will,
And our kind Class Committee will settle the bill.

And here 's your old friend the identical bard
Who has rhymed and recited you verse by the yard
Since the days of the empire of Andrew the First
Till you 're full to the brim and feel ready to burst.

It 's awful to think of, — how year after year
With his piece in his pocket he waits for you here;
No matter who 's missing, there always is one
To lug out his manuscript, sure as a gun.

"Why won't he stop writing?" Humanity cries:
The answer is briefly, "He can't if he tries;
He has played with his foolish old feather so long,
That the goose-quill in spite of him cackles in song."

You have watched him with patience from morning to dusk
Since the tassel was bright o'er the green of the husk,
And now — it 's too bad — it 's a pitiful job —
He has shelled the ripe ear till he 's come to the cob.

I see one face beaming — it listens so well
There must be some music yet left in my shell —
The wine of my soul is not thick on the lees;
One string is unbroken, one friend I can please!

Dear comrade, the sunshine of seasons gone by
Looks out from your tender and tear-moistened eye,
A pharos of love on an ice-girdled coast, —
Kind soul! — Don't you hear me? — He 's deaf as a post!

Can it be one of Nature's benevolent tricks
That you grow hard of hearing as I grow prolix?
And that look of delight which would angels beguile
Is the deaf man's prolonged unintelligent smile?

Ah! the ear may grow dull, and the eye may wax dim,
But they still know a classmate — they can't mistake him;
There is something to tell us, "That 's one of our band,"
Though we groped in the dark for a touch of his hand.

Well, Time with his snuffers is prowling about
And his shaky old fingers will soon snuff us out;
There 's a hint for us all in each pendulum tick,
For we 're low in the tallow and long in the wick.

You remember Rossini — you 've been at the play?
How his overture-endings keep crashing away

Till you think, "It 's all over — it can't but stop now —
That 's the screech and the bang of the final bow-wow."

And you find you 're mistaken; there 's lots more to come,
More banging, more screeching of fiddle and drum,
Till when the last ending is finished and done,
You feel like a horse when the winning-post 's won.

So I, who have sung to you, merry or sad,
Since the days when they called me a promising lad,
Though I 've made you more rhymes than a tutor could scan,
Have a few more still left, like the razor-strap man.

Now pray don't be frightened — I 'm ready to stop
My galloping anapests' clatter and pop —
In fact, if you say so, retire from to-day
To the garret I left, on a poet's half-pay.

And yet — I can't help it — perhaps — who can tell?
You might miss the poor singer you treated so well,
And confess you could stand him five minutes or so,
"It was so like old times we remember, you know."

'T is not that the music can signify much,
But then there are chords that awake with a touch,—
And our hearts can find echoes of sorrow and joy
To the winch of the minstrel who hails from Savoy.

So this hand-organ tune that I cheerfully grind
May bring the old places and faces to mind,
And seen in the light of the past we recall
The flowers that have faded bloom fairest of all!

1872.

OUR SWEET SINGER.

*

J. A.

One memory trembles on our lips:
It throbs in every breast;
In tear-dimmed eyes, in mirth's eclipse,
The shadow stands confessed.

Sweet voice, whose carols cheered so long
Our manhood's marching day,
Without thy breath of heavenly song,
How weary seems the way!

Vain every pictured phrase to tell
Our sorrowing hearts' desire:
The shattered harp, the broken shell,
The silent unstrung lyre;

For youth was round us while he sang;
It glowed in every tone;
With bridal chimes the echoes rang,
And made the past our own.

O blissful dream! Our nursery joys
We know must have an end,
But love's and friendship's broken toys
May God's good angels mend!

The cheering smile, the voice of mirth
And laughter's gay surprise
That please the children born of earth,
Why deem that Heaven denies?

Methinks in that refulgent sphere
That knows not sun or moon,
An earth-born saint might long to hear
One verse of "Bonny Doon";

Or walking through the streets of gold
In Heaven's unclouded light,
His lips recall the song of old
And hum "The sky is bright."

* * * * *

And can we smile when thou art dead?
Ah, brothers, even so!
The rose of summer will be red,
In spite of winter's snow.

Thou wouldst not leave us all in gloom
Because thy song is still,
Nor blight the banquet-garland's bloom
With grief's untimely chill.

The sighing wintry winds complain, —
The singing bird has flown, —
Hark! heard I not that ringing strain,
That clear celestial tone?

How poor these pallid phrases seem,
How weak this tinkling line,
As warbles through my waking dream
That angel voice of thine!

Thy requiem asks a sweeter lay;
It falters on my tongue;
For all we vainly strive to say,
Thou shouldst thyself have sung!

1873.

* * *

H. C. M. H. S. J. K. W.

THE dirge is played, the sad-voiced requiem sung
That faltered on the tongue;
On each white urn where memory dwells
The wreath of rustling immortelles
Our loving hands have hung,
And balmiest leaves have strown and tenderest blossoms flung.

The birds that filled the air with songs have flown,
The wintry blasts have blown,
And these for whom the voice of spring
Bade the sweet choirs their carols sing
Sleep in those chambers lone
Where snows untrodden lie, unheard the night-winds moan.

We clasp them all in memory, as the vine
Whose running stems intwine
The marble shaft, and steal around
The lowly stone, the nameless mound;
With sorrowing hearts resign
Our brothers true and tried, and close our broken line.

How fast the lamps of life grow dim and die
Beneath our sunset sky!
Still fading, as along our track
We cast our saddened glances back,
And while we vainly sigh
The shadowy day recedes, the starry night draws nigh,

As when from pier to pier across the tide
With even keel we glide,
The lights we left along the shore
Grow less and less, while more, yet more
New vistas open wide
Of fair illumined streets and casements golden-eyed.

Each closing circle of our sunlit sphere
Seems to bring Heaven more near:
Can we not dream that those we love
Are listening in the world above

And smiling as they hear
The voices known so well of friends that still are dear!

Does all that made us human fade away
With this dissolving clay!
Nay, rather deem the blessed isles
Are bright and gay with joyous smiles,
That angels have their play,
And saints that tire of song may claim their holiday.

All else of earth may perish; love alone
Not Heaven shall find outgrown!
Are they not here, our spirit guests
With love still throbbing in their breasts!
Once more let flowers be strown.
Welcome, ye shadowy forms, we count you still our own!

1873.

WHAT I HAVE COME FOR.

I HAVE come with my verses — I think I may claim
It is not the first time I have tried on the same.
They were puckered in rhyme, they were wrinkled in wit;
But your hearts were so large that they made them a fit.

I have come — not to tease you with more of my rhyme,
But to feel as I did in the blessed old time;
I want to hear him with the Brobdingnag laugh —
We count him at least as three men and a half.

I have come to meet judges so wise and so grand
That I shake in my shoes while they're shaking my hand;

And the prince among merchants who put back the
crown
When they tried to enthrone him the King of the Town.

I have come to see George — Yes, I think there are four,
If they all were like these I could wish there were more.
I have come to see one whom we used to call "Jim,"
I want to see — O, don't I want to see him!

I have come to grow young — on my word I declare
I have thought I detected a change in my hair!
One hour with "The Boys" will restore it to brown —
And a wrinkle or two I expect to rub down.

Yes, that 's what I 've come for, as all of us come;
When I meet the dear Boys I could wish I were dumb.
You asked me, you know, but it 's spoiling the fun;
I have told what I came for; my ditty is done.

1874.

OUR BANKER.

Old Time, in whose bank we deposit our notes,
Is a miser who always wants guineas for groats;
He keeps all his customers still in arrears
By lending them minutes and charging them years.

The twelvemonth rolls round and we never forget
On the counter before us to pay him our debt.
We reckon the marks he has chalked on the door,
Pay up and shake hands and begin a new score.

How long he will lend us, how much we may owe,
No angel will tell us, no mortal may know.
At fivescore, at fourscore, at threescore and ten,
He may close the account with a stroke of his pen.

Then here 's to the wrinkled old miser, our friend ;
May he send us his bills to the century's end,
And lend us the moments no sorrow alloys,
Till he squares his account with the last of "The Boys."

THE END.

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